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BACKGROUND TO BLACKPOOL

IT is no bad thing that the delegates are gathering at Blackpool for the Labour Party Conference, not in an interlude of deceptive calm, but under the threat of trade recession in the United States and industrial unrest at home. The unofficial strike of the locomotive men, coupled with the wage deadlock between the N.U.R. and the Railway Executive, comes on top of the still unsettled miners' dispute over concessionary coal. It should remind delegates that their main task is not to plan a clever election programme, with nicely balanced appeals to all classes, but to ensure that, if the looming economic crisis involves an all-round reduction in living standards, the reasons for it are understood, that austerity is fairly shared, and the causes which have led to mounting unrest among workers in nationalised industries are dealt with promptly and convincingly.

This unrest, which has been growing under the surface for many months, was undoubtedly aggravated by faults—mainly in the presentation—of this year's Budget. It has now broken out in a series of "revolts," of which the Sunday strikes on the North-east coast and the "go-slow" tactics adopted elsewhere by other railway workers are the most notable examples. Railwaymen feel aggrieved that in a welfare State, in which full employment is guaranteed for all, their wages and conditions have lagged behind those of workers in the formerly "unsheltered" industries. They are not prepared to accept improvements in the pay of their lowest categories of workers so long as their general wage level remains well below that of other trades. They are unmoved when the Railway Executive argues that its responsibility to Parliament is to "make ends meet" on the railways, and that it cannot afford to increase its wage bill. They retort that no nationalised industry can be permitted to under-pay essential workers when heavy interest charges to compensated ex-proprietors are a first charge on revenue and when the top officials of public corporations draw salaries which are high even by capitalist standards.

The problem which faces the railways is merely one facet of a wider national problem to which the Blackpool Conference will do well to address itself. The Railway Executive sees no way of reviving its falling revenue except by slashing fares. But it cannot effect such reductions and simultaneously raise wages except by a process of rationalisation—including wholesale dismissal of "redundant" staff—so drastic that the Unions would never tolerate it. In the same way, when we come to the national economy as a whole, the recent widening in the gap between exports and imports presents a painful and inescapable dilemma. Unless we are to accept a further slashing of imports—and this would mean not merely shortage of food supplies but unemployment through shortage of raw materials—we must evidently sell more abroad at more competitive prices. In time, this might be achieved by re-deployment, improved technical methods and increased productivity. But this is a long-term solution. With recession deepening in the United States, we cannot afford to wait. The immediate fact facing the Trade Unions is that if, as a result of the rigidity of the British wage structure, British costs and prices get completely out of step with those of competing capitalist countries, then there will be either import cuts and unemployment or—as a desperate and short-lived remedy—a devaluation of sterling which would inflict, with peculiar unfairness, an equally serious blow at Britain's standard of living.

Unemployment, followed by wage cuts, was the traditional capitalist reaction to a recession in world trade. It is not enough to say that a Labour Government must "reject" such a solution. The whole aim at Blackpool must be to find the alternative. Otherwise, not only will the Labour Party suffer in the next election, but the unions will lose most of the gains which they have made since 1939. It is easy enough to maintain full employment in boom conditions; the test of Socialist planning is whether it provides protection against the "inevitable" consequences of a slump. So far, it is greatly to the credit of the Government that, whereas the free economies, including America, Italy, Belgium and Germany, are already suffering from unemployment, our planned economy has shielded us from it. The question now is whether the unions will display the self-discipline and the Government the adherence to strict Socialist principles necessary to see us through.

What does this mean? The unions must accept hard facts, and take steps to prevent the inelasticity of the wage structure from ruining our prospects of recovery. Though it may well be necessary—as the Railway Executive now seems more inclined to admit—that minimum wages for the lowest-paid workers should be raised, it would be suicidal to embark on an all-round scaling up of incomes. In his turn, the Chancellor must realise that ostentatious spending may be statistically irrelevant and yet of intense political relevance. The wage freeze will only be accepted for a second year by the workers if it is accompanied by administrative action on genuinely Socialist lines. This must include the retention of rationing and the remodelling of physical controls so that they guide, instead of hampering, production; more imaginative use of cost-of-living subsidies to assist the hardest hit—the subsidy on children's clothing, for instance, should be restored even at the cost of economising somewhere else; and finally, since higher taxation of earned income is impracticable, definite inroads on property, including steeper surtax on unearned income, higher death duties and, it may well be, a capital levy.

Strike-breaking and Solidarity

The dockers' strike at Avonmouth, which has now lasted two weeks, has already been followed by similar action at Liverpool, and appeals for support have now gone out to London and other ports. This strike raises sharply the problem of rank-and-file loyalties. The men have refused to work any Canadian ships while the Canadian seamen's strike continues. The employers in the Bristol area have replied with a lockout, insisting that all ships be worked or none. The same line was taken at Liverpool, when the men walked off a Canadian ship rather than unload it. Mr. George Isaacs, justifying the use of Service labour at Avonmouth, stated that the men have been "persuaded by outside influences to take sides in the Canadian dispute," and that no action taken here can influence the outcome of the struggle between the Canadian Seamen's Union, on the one hand, and the employers and the Seafarers' International Union, on the other. The Transport and General Workers' Union takes the same attitude as the Minister towards this unofficial strike. The men's position is clear. They are prepared to work any ship not Canadian, and they feel that the lockout and the use of troops are provocative and unnecessary. There is a tradition of international solidarity among waterfront workers—shown in this case by sympathetic action in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The dockers hold that the S.I.U. is a strike-breaking union, since the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, in spite of pressure to suspend the C.S.U., has so far stood by it. Moreover, the C.S.U. is affiliated to the International Federation of Transport Workers, and is striking to maintain the wages and working conditions of its membership. The S.I.U., which has accepted terms from the employers which were rejected by the C.S.U., has been supplying crews for Canadian ships in an effort to break the strike and the C.S.U. at the same time. If the Government and union officials here insist that Canadian ships should be worked, they are themselves taking sides in the dispute.

The Paris Conference

The despatch from Mr. Alexander Werth which we print on a later page makes it clear that, while there is at present no possibility of an all-round political settlement of the German problem, it is still on the cards that a *modus vivendi* may be reached in the shape of an agreement to establish a German Central Economic Council which would serve as some sort of bridge between East and West Germany and might, in fact, come in the end to exercise a degree of political influence. Even if the results of the Foreign Ministers' Meeting are confined, so far as Germany is concerned, to such a limited agreement, it would be an error to write off the Conference as a failure. Moreover, there are other items on the agenda. In the case of Austria, the gap to be narrowed between Eastern and Western conceptions of a peace treaty is much less formidable than in the case of Germany. Then there is the problem of Greece. Dr. Evatt, it is reported, intends to visit Paris in order to appeal to the Big Four to accept some such proposals as those (noted in our columns last week) put forward by Mr. Sophianopoulos—truce, amnesty and supervised elections. Finally, it may be recalled that at the first session of the Foreign Ministers, Mr. Vyshinsky proposed that there should be discussion of Japanese peace settlement. In making this suggestion he probably had in mind the possibility of joint recognition of the new regime in China. If this were recognised, and if it were agreed that the problem of Japan should be discussed by the Big Four concerned—America, Britain, the U.S.S.R. and China—there would be parity of voting, and the U.S.S.R. would no longer be in a minority of one. Whether Japan comes up for discussion at this Conference or not, it seems probable that the three Western Ministers will use this opportunity to discuss among themselves the problem both of Japan and China. Mr. Acheson can hardly be indifferent to the conditions on which the members of the British Commonwealth would be prepared to accord *de facto* recognition to Mao Tse-tung.

The Anglo-Israeli Agreement

Sir Stafford Cripps is to be congratulated on the terms of the first agreement to be negotiated between the British and Israeli Governments. At one point the talks looked like breaking down altogether, but for once Treasury sense has prevailed over Foreign Office prejudice in our handling of the Palestine problem. The Chancellor has agreed to release during the next six months something over £6,000,000 of the Israeli assets frozen in this country. He realises that if the Israeli are permitted to buy British, British companies, which in the past were responsible for building up the Palestine economy, will be able at last to compete on fair terms with the Americans, who since the end of the Mandate have been making a strenuous bid to capture this lucrative market. Fortunately, the Israeli are compelled to conserve their dollars and eager to buy from Britain, which provides the only stable market for their main export—citrus. The first orders under the new agreement will be for telecommunications, fertilisers, lorries and tractors, prefabricated houses and irrigation piping; and there is a good chance that the equipment of the armed forces will be standardised on British models. Unrequited exports to Israel, in fact, provide a form of capital investment, which should earn dividends as soon as the comparatively small Israeli assets in London have been spent. The next task of the two Governments will be to settle the claims and counter-claims arising out of the termination of the Mandate. Here, the chances of agreement are negligible. We have filed a claim, for instance, for the cost of keeping the illegal immigrants in Cyprus and the Jews are counter-claiming for illegal detention!

Atom Politics

As President Truman said, Americans ought to stop getting hysterical every time the word "atom" is mentioned; but the bear-baiting of Mr. David Lilienthal, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, is not just hysteria. There is a deliberate intent. The pretexts that he was somehow responsible for an ounce of Uranium 235 getting mislaid and that he connived at a Communist getting an A.E.C. student-fellowship are just a blind. There was, of course, a hysterical scream that the uranium had been stolen by spies, but that has been disposed of. An ounce of uranium is about the size of a couple of aspirin tablets and, like radium needles which so often get into hospital ash-cans, it went astray. The student-fellowship has nothing to do with security: it is an academic facility intended to encourage young scientists to study nuclear-physics. The reason for trying to hound Lilienthal out of his job is that he is hated by a powerful section in the U.S.A. because he made a success of that proto-Socialist experiment, T.V.A., and because the Atomic Energy Commission is the only "Socialist" State-enterprise. Using that Vansittart of America, Senator Hickenlooper, who would find a "Red Plot" in a Mothers' Meeting, and Senator Cain, who has drafted a Bill, this section is trying to get Atomic Energy out of the hands of the Civil Administration and under the military control from which the McMahon Bill and the Atomic Scientists rescued it. If this move were to succeed, it would mean a "walk-out" of all responsible atomic scientists.

The Last of the War Trials

The last of the important Germans arrested for war crimes will shortly stand trial on an indictment drawn up by the British Government. Of the four senior commanders originally held for trial by the British, only von Mannstein remains; von Brauchitsch died last year, while von Rundstedt and Strauss have successfully pleaded ill health and will not now be tried. The long delay in deciding to try these men aroused understandable disquiet when the decision was announced last year, and, although the Government replied to its critics by suggesting that sufficient evidence for trial had only then become available, it seems reasonably sure that a little more energy and interest might have brought these men to sentence or acquittal long ago. The three Field-Marshals—Brauchitsch, Rundstedt, and Mannstein—were each at one time or another during the course of the war in command of the general officers already sentenced by an American court in what was known as the "High Command Trial," at Nuremberg. As commander of the 11th Army in Russia at the end of 1941, for instance, von Mannstein (still only 62) must answer the charge that he was responsible for the actions of men like General von Salmuth, whom the Americans sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for war crimes against humanity under both the civilian and military headings. The fact that the war ended four years ago should not be allowed to interfere with a fair and unsentimental examination of von Mannstein's treatment of such murderous decrees as the "Commissar Order" and others equally infamous. The Field-Marshal has just finished a book in which he recommends that Germany should work for control of the balance between East and West and should rapidly rearm to that end. The trial may help to remind people in the West, who so easily forget, what Nazi invasion really meant to those who experienced it.

The Hue and Cry

The John Lewis Partnership, instead of rescinding its unwise ban on Communists, has attempted to put itself in order by banning Fascists too. But, whereas the word "Communist" *can* be interpreted strictly as meaning a member of the Communist Party, the word "Fascist" has no such defined connotation—unless it is restricted to members of Sir Oswald Mosley's organisation. That would mean that it would apply to very few indeed—certainly not to many who would most naturally be called "Fascists." The ban in its new form is as unwise and dangerous as it was when it was to be applied only to Communists; and it is to be hoped that the Partnership will think yet again. The various Trade Union crusades to throw Communists and Communist sympathisers out of office stand on a different footing; but, even though the Communists have mainly themselves to thank for it, its dangers can be seen when it leads to the defeat of such a man as Sir Lewis Casson as Vice-President of Actors' Equity. The trouble about purges, even in non-totalitarian countries, is that there is apt to be no limit to them, when once they begin. In the manual workers' Trade Unions, the attempt to

enforce them by central influence is more likely to provoke a reaction that will strengthen the Communist hold than to succeed; but in some of the newer, professional Trade Unions the members can be all too easily stirred up to purge their best people, mainly because somebody starts a hue and cry. Even the limited attempt to remove Communists from key positions in the Civil Service has its dangers, as Sir Richard Redmayne pointed out in his presidential address to the Institution of Professional Civil Servants last week-end. Sir Richard said that the results of the purge gave him reason to doubt the necessity of the Government's decision. We add that the results have extended far beyond the Civil Service, encouraging such errors of judgment as that of the John Lewis Partnership.

World Farmers' Conference

The International Federation of Agricultural Producers (I.F.A.P.)—has opened its conference this week at Guelph, Ontario. I.F.A.P., which represents primarily British, American, Commonwealth, and West European farmers' movements, is the child of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations—yet another example of the tendency for government or inter-government economic organisations to stimulate the foundation of parallel "interest groups." I.F.A.P. is not an executive body, but at present a "talking shop"; yet it provides a meeting place for farmers from many countries and an opportunity for them to discuss particular marketing and price problems as well as the general desirability of F.A.O.'s plans for developing agricultural production and consumption on parallel lines as the central part of a movement to raise living standards throughout the world. The danger, of course, is that such a body, from being expansionist in a seller's market, may turn restrictionist as soon as agricultural prices show any tendency to decline. They are, however, bound to decline to some extent as world agricultural production recovers in the countries which were hard hit by the war. Wheat prices have already come down a good way in the United States; and the prices of such quality foodstuffs as eggs are due for a sharp decline as supplies of feeding-stuffs become more abundant. No one in his senses wants to force the farmers and peasants back to the old unfavourable terms of exchange, which involved very low living standards in so many agricultural countries. But the best hope for the agricultural populations lies not in artificial maintenance of the prices of foodstuffs but in a fall of industrial prices resulting from higher industrial productivity.

Mr. Bevan and the Dentists

Trying to persuade the dentists to agree to reductions in their scales under the National Health Service is like trying to take the gold-fillings out of their teeth. Although, in the first nine months of the operation of the Act, they have extracted out of the Ministry £21,800,000, instead of the estimated £8,150,000, they have declined to co-operate with Mr. Bevan in his attempts to reach a more reasonable basis. At the end of the first six months the Minister reported that one out of every five dentists in the country was earning more than £4,800 a year. To correct that, as a stop-gap, he withheld half of the dentists' earnings in excess of £400 a month. A working-party was also appointed to investigate the time-scales appropriate to each dental operation or treatment: manifestly, if dentists are earning such enormous fees, it can only be either by scamped work or overwork; and in either case the standards of dentistry are bound to suffer, and so are the patients. Since the working party's report will not be complete for some time, Mr. Bevan decided as a matter of urgency to make another revision of the payment scale. His new scheme involves a reduction, from June 1, of approximately 20 per cent. of the dentists' gross takings. On this scale, the average dentist should receive £1,778 a year for a chair-side week of 33 hours. This decision has infuriated the dentists; and in some districts there is talk of a strike. But delay would only have increased the ransom the Government has had to pay already.

M.R.P. and "Third Force."

Our Paris Correspondent writes: The M.R.P. clearly know on which side their bread is buttered. At their Congress held at Strasbourg last week-end they were particularly emphatic in rejecting the idea of any alliance with the Gaullists, and loudly proclaimed their belief in the present "Third Force" Government majority in France. To turn their back on de Gaulle as demonstratively as they did was all the more necessary after the unfortunate speech made by M. Bidault at Cherbourg a fortnight ago. There, in what was probably a moment of aberration, he offered an eventual alliance to de Gaulle. There was a violent row about it at the M.R.P. headquarters, which promptly issued an "official version" of the speech, in which any such alliance with de Gaulle was clearly rejected.

At Strasbourg Bidault was elected president of the M.R.P., and the Congress went out of its way to prove convincingly that the "official version" of the Cherbourg speech was the "correct" text. For the present, at any rate, the de Gaullists are clearly on the decline in France, and the M.R.P. (including M. Bidault) have now convinced themselves that, as long as France has a "Third Force" Government (and all the indications are that she will have such Governments for a long time to come), the M.R.P. will be an inevitable Government party. The M.R.P. leaders hold that the temper of the French people is now mainly in favour of unadventurous, "moderate" government, and that the present Cabinet is the *type* of government which will remain in office for a long time—even if the Queuille Government itself falls over the Budget deficit.

The Gaullist papers, such as the *Aurore*, are, of course, furious with the M.R.P. for several reasons—for rejecting the very idea of a different Government majority "as desired by certain conservative circles"; for attacking the de Gaullists as a "disruptive influence working against the national interests of France," and, last but not least, for opposing any sweeping electoral reform which would scrap proportional representation. The Gaullists were hoping in this way to increase their own number of deputies in the next National Assembly and to reduce the number of Communists almost to nothing.

The indications are that both the American Embassy and French Big Business are against de Gaulle to-day. Among the *bien-pensant* bourgeoisie, the publication of the Giraud Memoirs in the *Figaro*—dealing mostly with the Algiers period of the National Liberation Committee—have done de Gaulle considerable harm: they show him up as a man of morbid personal ambition and as a rather mean and petty intriguer. This may not be a true picture of de Gaulle; but the fact that the most widely read and most *bien-pensant* of the Right-wing Paris papers should have given immense prominence to these anti-de Gaulle memoirs does not increase de Gaulle's chances among those very people on whose support he would normally chiefly rely.

PARLIAMENT: Squaring the Circle

Wednesday

THE Lords adjourned on Monday with the perplexities of the Ireland Bill still bothering them. The problem was, "When is an Irishman not a member of the Republic of Ireland, even though Eire claims him?" On Tuesday, the Peers were still scratching their heads, but the Lord Chancellor, who had been in consultation with the Government and Opposition, had the serene air of a man with a compromise.

He began the day's business by joining in the tributes to the retiring Clerk of the Parliaments, Sir Henry Badeley. And when the Lord Chancellor put the Motion of Congratulation, they said unanimously, "Content!" (It is always a moving experience to see the Peers after lunch on a warm day rumble unanimously, "Content!")

Shortly afterwards the Lord Chancellor left the Woolsack, took off his wig, and sat on the Government Front Bench to deal with a series of amendments. No one watched him more anxiously from the Gallery than Professor Savory, the Member for Queen's University, Belfast, who in the Commons has fought consistently for clear definitions of citizenship under the British Nationality Act and the Ireland Bill, and who felt the matter rather personally, having been struck off the voters' register of Dublin University because he declined to enrol as a citizen of Eire.

The new clause moved by the Lord Chancellor to define a British subject under the Ireland Bill vindicated Savory's insistence on what some had treated as a purely academic matter. With his point of substance established, he could afford not to be unduly distressed that the Government rejected Lord Broughshane's indignant amendment to substitute "Irish Republic" for "Republic of Ireland." On balance, the Lords' debate on the Ireland Bill was less emotional than the Commons' debate. After all, no Peer was troubled, as was one Member of the Commons, by a letter which began, "Fifteen thousand Irishmen in your constituency are watching which way you vote . . ."

The Opposition in the Commons is less temperate and more erratic than the Opposition in the Lords. Between the Tory Central Office and the Opposition Front Bench, the liaison seems negligible. Take the Bulk-buying Debate last week. As Bruce pointed out, you might have thought, after Lord Woolton had discovered bulk-buying to be the root of most evils, that the Opposition would maintain the case in the House. All that happened was this. Lyttelton in a philosophical meander established that on a rising market a bulk-buyer is likely to make a profit, and on a falling market he is likely to make a loss.

Where was the passion of the Tory editorials and constituency speeches on bulk-buying? Certainly not on the Opposition benches. It seemed to have transferred itself to Michael Foot, who left the Tories in two minds as to whether they should interrupt the "rudest man in the House," as one of them muttered, and risk something even more scorching; or whether they should sweat out his speech in dignity. They turned their backs on him: one or two looked at the chandeliers; a few couldn't bear it and walked out.

Strauss, dealing with metals, and Strachey with food, both gave a simple balance-sheet of advantage in bulk-buying. It was significant that no Tory ventured to repeat the anti-Government chitter-chatter of under-employed brokers and commissionmen whom bulk-buying has made redundant.

The lesson of this debate, and of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's reference to "frightfully high" profits is that the Government might well hasten its inquiry into costs. For example, how many brokers still receive commission for purchases undertaken directly by the Government from the brokers' pre-war principals? The Tories have shown a particular sensitivity lately to the question of profits. But baiting Cripps, they have found, is less fun than baiting the Minister of War. When the Tories become louder, Cripps gets quieter; when they get redder, Cripps becomes paler; and as Lord John discovered on Tuesday, Cripps will only reply to "courteous questions."

MAURICE EDELMAN

AMBER LIGHT IN INDIA

INDIANS are watching the conquest of China by its Communist armies, and their eyes are fixed with even deeper anxiety on their neighbours of Burma. One day the test will come for the democratic republic of India also. How solid is its social and economic structure?

India's basic problems are still, as they always were, economic, but given an emotional population with a revolutionary tradition, they quickly boil over into political unrest. Since the disasters that accompanied partition, the Congress Government has two notable achievements to its credit. First, it has resisted the Hindu extremists; it has realised its old ideal of a secular Republic; it has enabled its Muslim minority of 25 or 30 millions to live in security. Secondly, Sardar Patel has solved the problem of the Princes' States more easily and more radically than most students of Indian affairs thought possible.

These are outstanding gains, but there is not much else on which we can dwell with satisfaction. The many attractive schemes (including a dozen projects on the Tennessee Valley model) for the development of India's natural resources are still only blue-prints, or else they advance very slowly. The resources that should have gone to these creative ends were diverted to the re-settlement of the millions of refugees from Pakistan, to the deplorable little war in Kashmir and the increased costs of army, navy and police. Many plans have been started for the manufacture of steel, the making of machine-tools, the encouragement of the merchant marine and shipbuilding. But the general picture is far from showing the rise in industrial production we should have expected. The dollar shortage and the difficulty in procuring machinery is part of the explanation. But Indian capitalists are manifestly playing a game of ca' canny, much as American capitalists did in the early years of the New Deal. They will not go all out in expanding production, nor will they subscribe capital for the Government's creative ventures, until they are sure that Pandit Nehru's Socialistic plans of development have been relegated to the invisible future. The Congress Government has done much to appease Big Business, but apparently not quite enough. At the same time the workers are losing heart. Wages lag behind prices and the rationing of grains, sugar, kerosene and cloth is both inefficient and corrupt. In some regions Congress is losing the confidence of the peasants also.

Some of this disillusionment was inevitable, for Congress had taught the masses to expect a new heaven and earth when the British left India. Few Indians, moreover, realise that the food shortage is world-wide. It is fair, also, to recognise that Congress took over an administrative machine which had been running down and losing its standards for several years before the transfer of power. Corruption became general in the supply services during the war; the police, who cannot live on their pay, were always corrupt, Congress was at its best when the struggle for Independence was at its hottest. Then it faced prison and the lathis of the police with courage and self-sacrifice. Gandhi foresaw the dangers that would come with office. That is why he taught his followers to lead a life of austere simplicity, and fixed rates of pay for Congress workers, legislators and Ministers at or below the level of a junior clerk's income. This discipline was forgotten when Congress won power without a rival to check it or criticise it. It flung itself on the sweets of office and scrambled for the rewards of its years of sacrifice. The corruption grew worse and enormous fortunes were made on the black market. The food control and rationing systems fell, in the small towns and villages, too often into the hands of dealers and shop-keepers who were the local party leaders.

Congress became under Gandhi's leadership a mass party which claimed the allegiance of every Indian, from the millionaire mill-owner to the Untouchable. Among its millions of members the small middle class and the more prosperous peasants predominated numerically, and, at its annual conferences, the Left could carry a semi-Socialist programme. But it always depended, as Gandhi himself confessed, on the donations of its wealthy adherents. Another weakness lay in the extravagant expenditure customary in contested elections. It was not unusual in the general election of 1946 for a candidate to spend a lakh of rupees (£7,500). Under such conditions at the top level, Congress, when it came to govern, was inevitably dominated by property. Its "bosses" in some Provinces evolved a technique for the suppression of critics as skilful as it was unscrupulous.

For the good of India and the normal working of representative democracy it is obvious that Congress, as an all-embracing nationalist party, ought now to break up. With the achievement of Independence, its work is done. Unfortunately, the first opposition it met with came from the two extremes, which both used violence. The militant Hindu fanatics, whose armed formations were responsible, with the rival volunteers of the Muslim League, for the slaughter in the Punjab, were the first to challenge it, when they murdered Gandhi. They had a widespread conspiratorial organisation, which Sardar Patel crushed by reviving the emergency measures of coercion which the British had used against terrorism and Civil Disobedience. The next challenge came from the Communists. They provoked savage riots in Calcutta. They used their influence in some of the Trade Unions to promote strikes, but failed when they tried to stop the railways. The new fact is their success in winning the peasants in some provinces. In East Punjab they organised a rising which was suppressed by the troops only after a pitched battle. In the United Provinces in the *panchayat* (village council) elections, they won several hundred villages. In some districts of Hyderabad and the neighbouring Andhra, they operated with guerilla bands of about two hundred men, which summarily divided the land, beat up or mutilated usurers and landlords, and murdered the local Congress leaders.

The tactics of these two violent parties compelled the Government to resort to emergency measures. The result has been a general curtailment of civil liberties and a restriction of the freedom of the press. The workers' right to strike has also been limited. The number of political prisoners held without trial is said to exceed any total reached during Gandhi's campaigns. Among these prisoners, in addition to the Hindu extremists and the Communists, the machine of repression has swept into its net some Socialists, Trade Unionists and other opponents of Congress who took no part in any criminal conspiracy. Sardar Patel has a rough fist and a strong will, but these discontents cannot be cured by coercion.

The salutary event in the recent political history of India has been the break-away from Congress of the Socialists. They are now an independent party which may become, when general elections under adult suffrage can be held, an effective Opposition. They scored a remarkable initial success by winning several of the big cities of the United Provinces in the municipal elections. They will have to fight with scanty funds on two fronts, against Congress and the Communists. Their chief asset is that, though they differed sharply from Gandhi in theory, they learned more from him than any rival group about the duty of personal devotion and simplicity in daily life. More sincerely, it may be, than any similar party, they live their Socialism. They are trying to give their young men and women an adequate training. Whether they yet have the maturity to tackle the bigger problems of administration, or the ability to win the peasants, the future will show. They have the first condition of success, integrity. India's prospects would look brighter if Jawaharlal Nehru, who used to hold their creed, were among them. His personal prestige and his charm have made him a figure in world politics, but with the Congress machine behind him, which he cannot control, what opportunity has he of realising the ideals that once inspired him? India will keep the freedom she has won, only if there emerge to lead her men and women who will set every other consideration aside to achieve a social transformation. The danger that faces Congress is that it may, as the years go on, become a totalitarian party closely resembling the Kuomintang. If it drifts in that direction, the Communists, sooner or later, will win the impoverished and disillusioned masses.

CAN THEY AGREE?

No one can tell yet how the Paris Conference will end. At the end of eight days there are some facts which stick out a mile, and some others that are scarcely visible. But some of the latter may prove decisively important. I would put first among the not very obvious facts the Russian belief that something has changed in the United States, and that the American Government, including President Truman himself, is anxious to arrive at a *modus vivendi*. A number of American observers here, I find, hold the view that, of all the three Western Ministers, Mr. Bevin is least keen on such an accommodation.

As the Russians see it, the out-and-out anti-Russians have, in one way or another, lost their key positions in the conduct of America's foreign policy—Mr. Marshall, who threatened to resign when Truman proposed to send Mr. Vinson to Moscow last autumn; Forrestal, who was carried away by anti-Soviet paranoia; also Clay, Royall and many others. The Russians now add to the list of "neutralised warmongers" "Chip" Bohlen, who has been moved to the relatively innocuous post of American Minister in Paris. Curiouser and curiouser, Mr. Baruch, of all people, instead of blowing up Moscow with atom bombs (which, for a long time the Russians believed to be his intention) is reported to be going to Moscow, as the personal envoy of President Truman, to discuss atomic energy with the Russians in a business-like way.

Probably this belief in a change of heart in Washington largely accounts for what many have described as the "amiable and affable" behaviour of Mr. Vyshinsky. In his speech on Friday, before the Western proposals were made, he was positively pleading, and making it perfectly clear that almost every point of the Soviet proposals was being put forward tentatively, as a basis of discussion, and that the Russians would be delighted to consider any amendments and counter-proposals. On Saturday the Western Powers broke their silence (during one of the previous sittings Mr. Bevin literally did not open

his mouth once—except to yawn); and here again, though he described the Western proposals as "scarcely satisfactory," Vyshinsky said that he would give them his "most careful study." His rejection, on Monday, of the Western plan was expected and emphasised that the U.S.S.R. is really unwilling for a general settlement on terms acceptable to the West or, perhaps, on any terms at all. Vyshinsky's references to "German political unity" were obviously intended for the benefit of German Communists and did not denote any change in the present Russian attitude towards the German problem. It was significant that though he called the Bonn Constitution a swindle, he did not insist on it being scrapped and was obviously anxious to hold the door open for some sort of economic settlement.

In short, there is every indication that the Russians want an agreement—however limited in scope. But, before examining the possibilities of this, I should like to note a fact which does stick out a mile, and which, oddly enough, has not been commented on nearly as much as one would have expected. That is the decision of the Russians—taken before they came to Paris—not to bother (on a short-term basis, at any rate) about German public opinion, but to arrive at a *modus vivendi* with the West, whether the Germans, including the German Communists, liked it or not. When I was recently in Poland, Polish opinion was becoming increasingly perturbed by the prospect of a Russo-German rapprochement. The opposition had started quite an effective whispering campaign suggesting that, before very long, there would be a Russo-German deal at Poland's expense; the Russians would, with or without compensation to the Poles, decide in favour of returning some of the Western territories to the Germans as the only means of creating a really pro-Russian party in Germany. Whether the Russians ever seriously considered such a move is hard to say. Certainly, when I recently talked to a Russian about the Oder-Neisse frontier, I was surprised how un-categorical he sounded about it. But that was some time before the Paris meeting.

Another card that the Russians might have played in the game of "winning" the Germans was the Saar, whose incorporation in France they had already opposed at the Moscow Conference in 1947. Here, in Paris, they might also have taken up again the early withdrawal of all occupation troops from Germany—*vide* the decisions of the Warsaw Conference. But, so far, there is nothing to suggest that Vyshinsky wants to see the Germans left to themselves, or that he wishes to make himself popular with the Germans, either at France's or at Poland's expense. One Russian here in Paris remarked to me during the second or third day of the Conference: "Memories are short; but all of us still ought to remember that we are dealing with *Germans*."

The truth is that by blundering into the Berlin Blockade, the Russians have stirred up tremendous anti-Russian feeling among the Germans, especially in Berlin; and the plebiscite they recently held in the East they rightly interpreted (whether the figures were cooked or not) as a great anti-Russian demonstration. That is one point; another point, to which I have already alluded, is the anxiety caused in Poland and Czechoslovakia by all the talk of a Russo-German rapprochement. It is significant that, although the olive-branch speeches made by Ochab and Fierlinger, the Polish and Czech delegates, at the German Socialist Unity Party Congress some months ago, were duly reported in the Polish and Czech press, they made an unpleasant impression in the two countries, and were not followed up by any further press comments on Polish-German and Czech-German friendship.

A curious reflection on the extraordinary secrecy of all Russian policy-shaping is the complete surprise that Vyshinsky's proposals caused at the opening of the Paris conference. The Western Ministers' deputies had, during the previous week, worked at the Quai d'Orsay largely on the assumption that, following up the Warsaw proposals, Vyshinsky would come out with a lot of "demagogic" stunts for bribing the Germans. What the Russians now aim at instead is the neutralisation of Germany. The withdrawal of troops in any near, or even clearly foreseeable future is just not mentioned; and neither the Russians nor the rest seem in a hurry to work out a German peace treaty. But "neutralisation" might be the basis for a *modus vivendi*. The *Monde*, apparently reflecting for once the truly official French line, declared itself last week completely in favour of the neutralisation of Germany as the lesser evil—the greater evil being its "atlantisation,"—i.e. its inclusion as an equal member, in the Atlantic Pact. The *Monde* is, of course, a remarkably wobbly paper; but, in so far as "neutralisation" is on the cards, the official French view is that there is much to be said for it. Western opinion, as the *Monde* points out, is psychologically unprepared for the "atlantisation" of Germany; moreover, the "atlantisation" of the whole of Germany is out of the question, while that of Western Germany alone would only intensify the strain between East and West, by acting as an unquestionable provocation to Russia.

As I write, both sides have stated their maximum demands; and, on the face of it, the two sets of proposals are irreconcilable. The Russians want the Bonn Constitution scrapped, with the German State Council superseding both the "Bonn Government" and the "People's Council" in the East. The Western powers want Western "democracy" to be extended to the Soviet Zone; they want the Russians to stop taking reparations out of current production and to hand back to the Germans the "Soviet trusts" in the Eastern Zone. There are numerous points in the two sets of proposals on which compromise will be difficult or impossible. But there are at least two important points on which agreement may prove possible—if the Western Powers desire it. One is the conditions for restoring *some form* of Four Power control; the other is the nature of the all-German committee which would co-ordinate trade, transport, and communications between the two parts of Germany. Lastly, a precise agreement may be arrived at over Berlin, and Berlin's currency problems.

Although Bonn will be hard for the Russians to swallow, they may in the end accept the *fait accompli* of the Western German State, provided they are given sufficiently good guarantees as to the neutralisation and demilitarisation of Western Germany. Similar neutralisation assurances will, in that case, of course, also be sought by the Western Powers with regard to Eastern Germany. The greatest stumbling block for the re-establishment of Four-Power control is, of course, the veto. The less pessimistic American observers believe, however, that the unanimity rule may be applied in certain cases only—for example, when Germany has violated international agreements. Since, in matters of trade, the agreements between East and West would be, in most cases, of a bilateral nature, the unanimity rule might easily apply there, too.

There has been a tendency, during the first week, to exaggerate certain difficulties: M Schuman, for example, found it difficult to visualise any organism which could co-ordinate the "Socialist economy" of the Soviet Zone and the capitalist economy of the Western Zones; but, in reality, the two Zones are not as different as all that—with 65 per cent of industry, and almost the whole of trade in the Soviet Zone still in private hands. Although the prospects of an agreement look remote at the moment, the possibilities of a limited economic agreement are there, especially if both sides are more or less agreed that the neutralisation of Germany (which would mean the end of the dangerous auction sale of Germany's friendship) is a desirable thing. What gives the Russians some confidence that the West will not reject all their proposals is the very fact that Western Germany is developing economically very rapidly and that the time is near when, to maintain her production, she must have markets in the East—if she is not to start cut-throat competition with Britain, France and America.

Paris, May 31. ALEXANDER WERTH

A LONDON DIARY

At least one Senator decided that the Bow Street magistrate's dismissal of the American case for Eisler's extradition was an example of gross ingratitude for Marshall Aid. The picture would not have been complete if there had been no such American comment. Again, as if to round off the picture, the U.S. Attorney General retorted with wild threats of capturing Eisler somehow; but he was told to shut up by the State Department, which in this matter seems to reflect the general trend of sensible opinion. The number of Americans who would really like to think that Britain had abandoned her own rule of law in order to please the American police authorities must be small. Over here, almost everyone was relieved. It would have been detestable if we had handed over an obvious political refugee merely because it was America that had made the demand. The political refugee himself was all gratitude to the wonderful English people and fulsome about the fairness of the British courts. It would be pleasant, but I fear optimistic, to assume that he will now give a course of lectures behind the iron curtain about the benefits of the rule of law in England and explain that it is a good idea to have a Judiciary which is independent of the Executive.

* * *

I wonder whether the Ministers concerned fully realise the reaction of the average worker in a nationalised industry to the announcements he is constantly reading of new appointments to Regional Boards? Many of these posts are part-time and very lucrative by working-class standards, with salaries ranging from £500 to £750. If the Minister selects a trade unionist or a Labour Councillor there is always bitter jealousy, and if he takes a Conservative business man there is violent political opposition. Anyway, soon after the Board starts working, rumours are rife about expensive lunches and hand-outs of petrol coupons. The fact is that these jobs are the directorates of a new managerial society. In the case of Gas and Electricity, responsibility has been borne in the past in numerous local authorities by elected Councillors who never dreamt of demanding salaries. Now control has been moved to remote regional headquarters, and the element of unpaid local democracy has entirely disappeared. There will, of course, be enormous advantages, especially for undeveloped rural areas, in the nationalisation of gas, electricity and water. But there are none at all, either for the consumer or for the worker who lives in a progressive muni-

cipality. It is, of course, true that such municipalities are bound to have to pay part of the bill for providing services to backward areas, but in the present set-up they are losing not only money but local democracy as well. The Government has plumped for "taking the nationalised industries out of politics," and seems to interpret this to mean abolishing popular control. This is particularly bad in the case of gas, electricity and water. First, Parliamentary control goes, then local control goes, too, and with it all the very real virtues of municipal Socialism. Today, the Boards are responsible solely—and very remotely—to one Minister. We are creating in this way not a democratic Socialist society, but a managerial society on the Burnham model.

* * *

I doubt if many people outside the coal industry realise what an admirable job has been done by the Miners' Welfare Commission since it added, in 1942, to its other activities the responsibility for organising special rehabilitation facilities for injured miners. There are now eight Centres where the victims of accidents—and 25 per cent. of the injuries received in the mining industry are fractures—are sent for physiotherapy. The results of this pioneering work are impressive. Although the Centres cater for the "difficult" cases, in need of treatment over and above normal hospital care, nearly 90 per cent. of the admissions to the Centres are able to return to the mining industry—61 per cent. to their normal pre-accident work, and 28 per cent. to lighter work. I hope that the next step, in an industry from which accidents and "employment" diseases are inseparable, will be to develop similar Centres for the treatment of pneumokoniosis and nystagmus on a wide scale, and also to deal with the particularly distressing problem of the paraplegic—a man whose spinal column has received such damage from a fall of roof that there is total paralysis of the body below the injury. I am told that there is hope for such cases, which used to be regarded as hopeless, if special treatment can be applied with a minimum of delay.

* * *

Reading recent Tory propaganda one might think that John Strachey had been deliberately withholding meat from the British public and, thereby, in some obscure way, furthering his own interests. Now that he looks like bringing off an agreement with the Argentine which should enable him to increase the ration, I presume that he will be accused of seeking popularity for himself and buying votes for his party. The same fantastic nonsense arises over the analgesia row. Obviously enough, Mr. Bevan has politically everything to gain by promising analgesia to every mother. Only bachelors and sadists, with perhaps some religious fanatics, can possibly disagree with the demand that the pains of motherhood should be eased by medical science. Unhappily, medical science is not fully satisfied with the means of administering safe analgesia to women having their confinements at home. In hospital, with its resources and expert staff, it is different, although even there authorities are divided on the merits of various analgesics and the timing of intervention. The gas-and-air apparatus for midwives is bulky and its handling requires training—and a motor car to transport it. Nevertheless, the Minister is able to demonstrate excellent progress in providing analgesia for home-wifery. In spite of all the additional demands on the services of midwives, 25 per cent. more have been trained to administer gas-and-air. He also urges the authorities to take full advantage of his arrangement with the motor industry to make cars for midwives a priority.

Ten years and more have passed since I was last in the Cotswolds, at Burford or Great Barrington, at the Slaughters or Stanway and Stanton, at Bourton-on-the-Water, Winchcombe, Saintbury, Chipping Campden or Shipton-under-Wychwood. I still believe it's the finest part of England. Recently I found myself at Stow-on-the-Wold, with the Fair filling the lovely old market place with raucous music and tawdry colour. I had never thought of the contrast—all those gypsy colours against the mellow gold of Cotswold houses. I love a Fair. The city in which I grew up was turned over to the Fair for several days in the first week of every May. We saved up as children and thought ourselves lucky if we had a shilling to spend. There were sticks with ribands at the end and balls on the end of elastic with which you could sock your friend one as you passed him without his knowing where the sock came from. There were delicious sticky ginger snaps that we called jumbles, and there was, I suppose, a lot of beer and whisky, for by ten o'clock the streets were full of drunks and nice children went home to bed.

* * *

So it was with excitement that I explored the smaller Fair at Stow. The palmist in her smart caravan seemed unchanged, but she charged you half-a-crown, just as the coco-nut shies offered you one ball for threepence instead of three balls for a penny as in my young days. The horse roundabouts seemed about the same except that I saw no cocks, ostriches or other outlandish beasts to ride; and the side-shows were much the same except that fewer people seemed interested in the games of semi-skill, with balls or hoops or airguns. I saw no monsters or fat women and no one was drunk. It was very respectable. The most popular "buy" came from a mechanical device which spun sugar into gossamer thinness and for sixpence presented you with a sweet that looked big enough to satisfy a regiment of children, but which melted into a blissful nothingness as soon as your lips touched it. On the whole the side-shows were neglected and I had a long chat with a man who'd been brought up in the fair business and been imprudent enough to stay in it, while his brothers went off into the unromantic but lucrative job of fleecing people at the dogs. Another woman told a sad tale of the public's desertion. . . . Costs were high and people had no money to spend. And yet the public was there and enjoying itself, and spending money, too. The helter-skelter, which really looks dangerous, but apparently isn't, the electric cars in which you and your girl try, always unsuccessfully, to overthrow other pairs who, equally without malice, are trying to involve you in a similarly terrible accident—these were as crowded and noisy as you could wish. But such machines, I gathered from my friendly showman, all belonged to a few big capitalists. He said he'd like my opinion, but he had come to the conclusion that it was the fault of the Government that he was doing so badly. Perhaps he might be wrong but that was how he saw it . . . did I think he was right? Or was it something bad happening in the world that would go on whatever Government was in power?

* * *

It was raining heavily and I was soaked by the time I got to the shelter where half a dozen people were waiting for the bus. Suddenly I was butted from behind by an umbrella and a hustling woman's voice said: "So this is Socialism. Move along please, move along, and let a woman get out of the rain." As I turned round, the same voice said: "Hey, taxi," and before I could apologise she was in and off.

CRITIC

LITTLE GREY STRIKE

As the Whitsuntide week-end draws nigh,
There's an old-fashioned railwayman's strike;
Sunday trains do not go, that the public may know
There are rules engine drivers dislike.
On the North-Eastern long-distance road,
For their dear ones at nightfall they pine,
And on lodging-out turns the railwayman yearns
For his little grey home down the line.

British Railways would welcome them in,
There's a feed at the end of the run,
There's a litte grey bed for the fireman's head,
When the bi-monthly schedule is done;
But duties on trains of the State
On the engineer's home-life encroach,
And he claims as a right a ride home every night
In a little grey passenger coach.

The home-loving, long-distance crew
The weekly time-table upsets;
There's no Cabinet smile for the strike rank and file—
The Executive broadcasts regrets;
The Union leaders may call,
But the strike of the homesick will spread—
If it comes to the worst, workers may be coerced,
But the railwaymen will not be led.

A strike on State Specials may wreck
The public's Bank Holiday plan,
For millions there are who would travel as far
From their little grey homes as they can;
Be their homes in the west or the east,
A trip far away they intend—
All would take a poor view if they had to make do
With a little grey Whitsun week-end.

The strike may drive dollars away,
It may hold up the Blackpool express,
It may make Labour's team forfeit public esteem,
But the railwaymen couldn't care less;
It's an old-fashioned, home-lovers' strike,
Not a symptom of labour unrest—
But they won't sleep away, come the end of the day,
From their little grey homes in the west.

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed. Paste entries on a POSTCARD.

Mr. John Nicholas, managing director of Rumble, Crowther, and Nicholas, Limited, emphatically desired to see advertising employed in an all-out drive for "Christian morality and eternal truth." He submitted that advertising was one of the four most influential and dynamic forces ever unleashed by man (religion, science, and mass production were the others).—*Manchester Guardian.* (A. Baker.)

Ability to hoot like an owl should not be made a test for the Church, says the Rev. Richard Crookshank, recalling his own experiences.—*Daily Mirror.* (Zoë L. Anstey.)

There is only one way to put British tennis back where it should be—big-scale planning worthy of the Mulberry harbour and the Pluto pipeline efforts.—*Sunday Express.* (P. A. Evans.)

A correspondent says that the "hammer and sickle-shaped" flower beds in the "Peace Garden" should be removed as they suggest to aeroplanes that the city is Communist.—Sheffield *Star.* (A. G. Flower.)

"Failure of the Heart and Circulation": by Terence East, M.A., D.M., F.R.C.P.—This delightful little volume is devoted to problems of central and peripheral circulatory failure. . . . It is far too good to miss!—Book review in *Medical Press.* (E. Kingston.)

Sherry, pet cat of the Bishop of Colchester, has been renamed Shandy. "One of my clergy suggested Sherry was a little too strong," the Bishop explained.—*People.* (Ishbel G. Beatty.)

Yet the Guards are no longer as patrician as formerly because a few of the gaps filled to replace some who gave their lives in the war hardly came from the old patrician families. But they have been absorbed in the most friendly fashion and all fit in to one happy family—precisely as will those from a lesser status fit into the Public School spirit in years to come.—*Liverpool Daily Post.* (G. V. Bonner.)

TURKISH BALANCE SHEET—I

[The author of the following article was the *New York Times'* correspondent in Turkey from March 15, 1946, to May 2, 1949, when he resigned, with deep regret, on the grounds that his despatches, when out of harmony with U.S. State Department policy, were not accorded space in the columns of the newspaper whose accredited correspondent he was.]

TWENTY moons and more have waxed and waned over Anatolia since Turkey was enfolded in the protective embrace of the Truman Doctrine. The American Aid to Turkey Agreement was signed on July 12, 1947. Assistance from the United States was given for a dual purpose. Under American tutelage, Turkish armed forces were to be re-equipped, trained and built up to a strength capable of offering at least some effective resistance to hypothetical aggression by the Soviet Union; simultaneously, as President Truman declared and lately re-emphasized, the economy of Turkey was to be given sufficient "stability" to make it impervious to Communist infiltration. Misery and hunger must not be allowed to play into "subversive" hands. In the first year of the Agreement the cost to the American taxpayer of this effort to establish a reliable "anti-Soviet bastion" in the Middle East was $100 million, and dollars continue to pour into Turkey, even though her share in the O.E.E.C. distribution of Marshall Aid is small. It may be timely, therefore, to attempt to draw up a provisional balance sheet of what has been accomplished, first in the military, and then in the politico-economic field. Neither in Britain nor in the United States has the public had much chance of learning what has been achieved, or how much has been condoned, in Mr. Truman's name.

Militarily, it is a story of "fair beginnings." In the late summer of 1947, when an exploratory U.S. Military Mission returned to Washington after a six week's survey of Turkey's defence needs, it brought back to the Pentagon roseate reports of military possibilities. The Mission may have been favourably impressed by the traditional Turkish hospitality which they received: in three weeks of their stay they attended no fewer than forty-two banquets and cocktail parties. It is to be presumed, however, that their appreciation of the strategic situation and of Turkey's available resources was based on other evidence. At any rate General Oliver, head of the Mission, told the American press that he would be "glad and proud" to command Turkish troops; and his colleague, Rear-Admiral Hermann, drew favourable comparisons between Turkish and American Navy personnel. The period scheduled for bringing the "bastion" up to strength was three years.

It has now been recognized that this calculation, in a country over much of which the main means of locomotion is still the wooden-wheeled ox-cart, was unduly optimistic. The three years in which Turkish forces were to be brought to a high point of efficiency under U.S. supervision have been lengthened to five, and a much less sanguine appreciation of strategic possibilities has had to be accepted. General Salih Omurtak, Chief of the Turkish General Staff, has had to acquiesce in plans for the withdrawal of the Turkish "resistance belt" from the Pasinler Line in the Eastern region of Erzurum, and from the Catalca fortifications in Thrace, to the triangular bridgehead formed in Southern Turkey by the Toros and Amanos mountain ranges, with Iskenderun as main supply port. Under this defence plan, which would mean abandoning the bulk of Turkey, including Istanbul, a force of 12-15 Turkish divisions is allotted the task of protecting this bridgehead, from which U.S. planes would take off from secondary air strips for attacks on Baku.

Would even this bridgehead be tenable, to say nothing of the planned "diversionary counter-attacks" by Turkish troops against forces "advancing" from the North? Last February the annual Army manœuvres revealed "disastrous" deficiencies in communications, supply and tactics. Units of the First Army, on which American training efforts had been concentrated and which is generally regarded as the best of Turkey's three Armies, were assigned, as an exercise, the defence of the Bosphorus. The U.S. umpires' verdict was that the defending force had been destroyed, and its headquarters captured, by the "enemy." On the conclusion of the manœuvres, General McBride, head of T.U.S.A.G. (Turkish United States Army Group), addressed his staff at the Ankara headquarters of the U.S. Aid Mission. "It would take the Russians," he said, "eight days in Turkey—one day to knock 'em down, seven to occupy the country." His comments contrast oddly with General Oliver's optimism, eighteen months ago.

If, in search of an explanation of Turkey's failure militarily to live up to sanguine American hopes, you interrogate Turkish officers, their retort is that the quantity of war material delivered by the United States has been disappointing (little more than 100,000 tons had been received up to the beginning of 1949), and that the quality of much of it has been defective. Certainly the record of the two squadrons of P.47 American fighter aircraft delivered last year was unpropitious. When they were taken into service, there was an alarming increase of fatal crashes among Turkish pilots; as many as fourteen were published in one month. As a result, on September 20, 1948, the Turkish Commander of the Izmir air base ordered all these machines to be grounded. It was subsequently reported that these P.47s were found to have defective carburettors and perished rubber "hoses," as a result of their having been kept for a long time in surplus dumps in Germany. When the machines were finally "reconditioned," a flight was staged over Ankara to celebrate the occasion of the anniversary of the Turkish Republic on October 29. Three crashed, for reasons unknown to this correspondent. Officers of T.U.S.A.G. complain that "the Turks are not technically minded." However that may be, flying hours have since been drastically reduced in the Turkish Air Force, partly to economise in fuel, but mainly to save the lives of Turkish pilots. It remains to be seen what the experience will be with the 90 surplus C.47s which Turkey is scheduled to receive after hard service by these machines in the Berlin air-lift.

Turkish naval officers are equally dissatisfied. Out of eight surplus American mine-sweepers transferred to Turkey under the Aid Agreement, five have been out of commission for a considerable time. Their Diesel engines, it is said, are worn out; the supply of spare parts has proved inadequate, and Turkey has had to buy spares for dollars from a private U.S. firm. Another complaint is that the four submarines transferred were stripped, before delivery, of many of their modern devices, which the Turks have been unable to obtain from the U.S.A. in spite of repeated demands. Rear-Admiral Settle, head of the U.S. Naval Group, who recently resigned, was known to have been trying to relinquish his post for months past because of disappointment with the poor results obtained in the application of the naval phase of the Aid programme. Here again the Americans have been discovering that the Turks are not "technically minded"; and Captain Mosley, Chief of the U.S. Submarine Instruction Unit, who recently reported that the submarines given to Turkey could operate, under prevailing conditions, only for a matter of "a few days," has advised the Aid Mission that no additional vessels should be made over to the Turkish Navy.

In trying to strengthen Turkey's armed forces by modern equipment and methods of training which many Turkish officers have found uncongenial and unsuitable to Turkish conditions, the U.S. Mission has throughout disregarded one vital factor. It is not merely that the Turks are not "mechanically minded," and that illiteracy still stands at 75 per cent. in the Turkish population; the success of the whole plan depended ultimately on the welfare and morale of the common sailors and soldiers of Turkey.

The Mission has been sensitive to any decline in the morale of its own personnel. Last February, for instance, General McBride authorised an American newspaper man in Turkey to report that the Mission's "efficiency is being hampered"—the reason being that there had been a small cut in the station allowances of the Mission's members; and, when U.S. naval personnel at Gölcük declined to share quarters on shore with Turkish ratings, one of Turkey's few passenger ships was, for several months, moored off the base as a floating hotel at a daily cost of £200 (sterling) drawn from funds provided for the modernisation of the Turkish navy. One wonders whether the General is unaware that an American G.I. draws pay higher than that to which a Turkish General is entitled, or that a Turkish private is paid little more than 1s. a month, for which he must put up with being regularly cursed and beaten by his officers. In this vital issue of rank-and-file morale, the U.S. Mission has been singularly blind; nothing has been done to improve relations between Turkish officers and men, nor has any attention been given to the pay and conditions of the Turkish soldier, who is being asked, in this distant outpost of President Truman's, to defend with his life the American Century against the Soviet aggressor. Yet the senior members of the Mission, who have access to all the files of the Turkish General Staff, must surely know of the paragraph in Mobilisation Orders which provides for general transfers of officers to units other than their own as a precaution against being shot in action by the resentful soldiers they have maltreated.

If Turkey lacks both real military strength and economic stability, the blame lies not with "the Russian menace," but with the unreformed evils within her own social system. Errors and failures in the military field are not the only operative causes of the pitiable results which application of the Truman Doctrine to Turkey has achieved. Nor are they the only reason for the growing antagonism felt by the Turkish common people to American intervention in support of President Inönu's Government. They are to be sought also in the unrelieved tragedy of Turkey's political and economic situation.

ASLAN HUMBARACI

TIED COTTAGES

LIKE the horse whose jockey has ridden a waiting race to bring him up to the front in the last furlong, the agricultural tied cottage question, on which the Government has been stalling for four years, may well become a prominent issue between now and the 1950 Election. A tied house may be defined as a house owned by the employer and occupied by the worker *as a condition of his employment*. The italicised words are important. It is by no means uncommon for employers to own their employees' houses; for example, many railway workers in Crewe, Swindon and Camden Town live in railway-owned houses, and many miners live in houses owned by the Coal Board. The employer-landlord relationship, by itself, is harmless; but it becomes objectionable where the employee-tenant occupies the house by virtue of his employment, because this carries with it eviction as the corollary of dismissal. This relationship—the tied house proper—whilst by no means unknown in mining, railways (e.g., the level-crossing keeper), and in licensed houses, is a peculiar feature of agriculture. It is impossible to get exact figures, but it is estimated that there are some 184,000 tied agricultural cottages; about two in every five farmworkers' houses are tied.

There are two types of tied house. The practical distinction between them is small, but as the Ministers of Health and Agriculture seem to have been misled by their advisers into believing that the difference is one of real substance, it is worth noting. First, there is the tied house occupied by "the service occupier." This is a house owned by the employer and occupied as a condition of his employment by a worker who pays no rent. Included in this category comes the worker who has six shillings per week deducted for his cottage from his minimum wage as permitted by the Agricultural Wages Acts; this deduction does not rank as rent. The service occupier has no rights whatever. As soon as his employment ceases, his right to the house ends; he is a trespasser. Legally, the landlord can—and sometimes does—throw him and his furniture out on to the common. In practice, following the advice of the National Farmers Union, the landlord applies for a Court Order. Such an Order must be given against a service occupier, and the maximum grace allowed by the Court is one month.

Secondly, there is "the service tenant." This case arises where a house is owned by the employer and occupied as a condition of his employment by a worker who pays the full statutory rent laid down by the Rent Restrictions Acts. It might be thought, and Mr. Bevan in his innocence certainly seems to think, that such a man gets security of tenure. True, he is protected by the Acts, but, in fact, his rights are scarcely greater than those of the service occupier; what the Acts give, they themselves take way. The charter of the protected tenant is Section 3 of the 1933 Act. This says that no protected tenant may be evicted unless alternative accommodation is available or unless he falls within one of the categories set out in the Schedule to the Act. The material part of this says that possession shall be given where the house is needed by the landlord for a fresh employee where the existing tenant was a former employee who occupied it as a condition of his employment. In other words, the fact that a tied house tenant is "protected" gives him no real protection at all; he can be evicted, on a Court Order, without proof of alternative accommodation. The normal Possession Order made against him is from one to three months.

The tentacles of the tied cottage system stretch all over rural Britain; all non-agricultural rural dwellers are under its threat. If you live in the country, pay your full rent and do not work in agriculture, you are still liable to be caught up in the machine. There is nothing to stop your landlord from selling the house you dwell in to a farmer; there is nothing to stop that farmer from applying to the County Agricultural Committee for a certificate that he needs your house for a farm worker; and, with that certificate, it is virtually automatic for the Court then to make a Possession Order against you, without proof of alternative accommodation. Over 1,000 fully protected tenants get evicted in this way every year, and their houses thereafter become tied agricultural cottages.

The question has two facets, the human and the political. The human aspect is crude in its simplicity. It is a crime against humanity that a man and his family are liable to be turned out of house and home—either at a landlord's whim or after the formality of a Court case—merely because he has lost his job. The economic and moral power that this right gives to the employer shocks the conscience: it offends every concept of human dignity. The viciousness of this power is particularly obvious in a country village where everyone knows each other's business—where a "Vote Labour" placard in a window, attendance at a Union meeting on the green, a wife's snubbing of the charity of the squire's lady are all duly noted in Hall, Vicarage and farmhouse.

The political aspect can be stated no less baldly. The Labour Party Conference, the T.U.C., and the Co-operative Party Conference have all gone on record for the abolition of the tied cottage. *Let Us Face the Future* pledged abolition during the lifetime of this Parliament. Many agricultural seats were won on the strength of this promise; as many will be lost in 1950 if the promise is not fulfilled. Labour needs all the rural seats it can get if it wants to win in 1950. Mr. Morgan Phillips and his statisticians may be well advised to count the political cost of the tied cottage issue on the Labour body politic. Some of us, standing in the shade of the six farm labourers of Tolpuddle, will be more concerned with the Movement's political soul.

O. H. PARSONS

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

From "The New Statesman" of June, 1924

Towards Socialism?

Capital, or the thinking brain of Capital, has also been making discoveries. . . . Coal mining, under the existing system, is being dragged down by its economic tail to a dangerous state of inefficiency. Therefore the "brainy" Capitalists . . . are looking at the question of State-controlled industry, even of limited nationalisation, in an entirely different light.

Irish Purity

When *Juno and the Paycock*, the Abbey success recently noticed in these columns, was presented last week at the Cork Palace, the management insisted that the heroine, instead of being betrayed, should be legally married and then deserted by her husband. These changes ruined Mr. O'Casey's tragedy, but this was a small price to pay for asserting the great principle that, even if children are born out of wedlock in Ireland, the Irish theatre must be no party to smirching the purity of Irish womanhood by permitting an unmarried mother to appear on the stage.

Simplification

One may object—indeed, for our part, we strongly object—to many of Signor Mussolini's methods, but it cannot be denied that if Germany had a Mussolini (or even a Lenin) the European situation at this moment would be vastly simplified.

DONA NOBIS PACEM—III

IN Spain today, the lid is shut tight on the grievances of poverty.

The workers have no official outlet for their complaints. Newspapers ignore them, concentrating on *Notas Religiosas*, projects of electrification, *Futbol*, the nomination of provincial deputies—selected for their "generous Spanish arrogance and economic capacities"—and respectful accounts of the manoeuvres on the *Bolsa*. Their "Unions" are a Fascist sham, operated by a sub-branch of the Falange. Consequently, there is a great deal of explosive resentment piling up under the hatches—worse now than anyone remembers it. The men talk angrily at work, on trams and buses, and shut up like lightning on the appearance of the shiny-black tricorn hat of the *Guardia Civil*, or of a civilian member of the Secret Police, all of whom they recognise at sight. "They did terrible things during the war," said a Spanish woman who has lived fifteen years in Malaga. "But they are only waiting for the chance to do something more terrible. *Spera*! *Spera*! they say."

This woman charged the present Government with neglecting what she called the "moral comfort" of the poor people. By which she meant, not only are they left poor, they are left without any feeling that the powerful and the well-off take notice of their fate. She used the phrase "without conscience and without mercy," which confirmed my impressions in Madrid, and in Malaga too. One morning I felt so overwhelmed by the swarm of famished, despairing people that I stopped a woman passing with a small bag of coal chips and asked her what she felt about it. But she was all right, it seemed—she was a doctor!—and she assured me that everybody was all right. And a Malagan newspaper that day had an article of sneering disparagement against the beggars, calling their ingenuities "new proceedings against sensitive souls," and roaming back to Don Quixote for precedents.

Malaga is a sloppy old Levantine port, and Andalucia has always been in a bad way. The Republic failed to deal with the problem of the vast estates, absentee landlords, and poverty-stricken seasonal labourers. The Andalucian character tends to sloth. "If we're not eating," they'll say, "at least we're resting!" In the winter, grisly old mothers will squat with fire in a tin sending its heat up between their legs, and when things get too bad, send their children out "*para resolvar la situación*," and cuff them if they come back empty-handed. In Granada I was walking past some small, ragged children, when a rough-faced woman with unkempt hair caught sight of me, and barked fiercely at the children, who all immediately came whining and begging. That woman was a vile slut beyond reclamation.

You have to separate the permanent from the new. Spain has always been a country of individual recalcitrance, detesting obligation and indifferent to social claim. Five or six years after the installation of traffic-lights and pedestrian street-crossings in Madrid, people still preferred to pay the fine of 5 pesetas to a policeman in order to be able to cross in the wrong place. There are plenty of Spaniards today who admit the police tyranny and the crisis of poverty, but shrug their shoulders and blame it all on climate and the Spanish character. And they'll tell you that they prefer it that way because—whatever the heights of wealth and depths of poverty—people in Spain don't want to be bothered with each other. "One's up, one's down!" shrug. "We only unite against the outside, like Napoleon."

And they add, rubbing your nose in the point, that they would rather wallow in misery than have it mitigated by Marshall Aid. "I have a table in my house and as long as I'm free I can have it standing upside down if I like. But if I depend on your help, you can come into my house, and tell me to put it up the right way!"

Yet one feels, hearing this old and veracious story, that it is not quite the same now. The indifference has been distorted into a principle and tricked out with a philistine philosophy of inevitable cycles. "We welcome a new Mayor with flowers and music, he can do any amount of good, but soon—out he goes! With us no Government can do much or last for long. Primo de Rivera was the best, but we put him out of the door." The picture of immaculate recalcitrance has to be bolstered by the extraordinary fiction that the help received by Franco during the Spanish War from Hitler and Mussolini was "all paid for"; that the troops sent by Italy were "voluntarios" (they admit only one division); and that therefore Spain had no obligation to help the Fascist Dictators afterwards. The picture is distorted, and one remembers that, from Giner down to Prieto, there have always been Spaniards who set their faces against it, in order to get things improved. I remember the warm-hearted animation of the period of the Republic. You won't find that animation anywhere in Spain now. You'll only find, on the one hand, this hard, knuckle-dusting philosophy (eked out with harsh dead talk of *Futbol*, San Sebastian, the Escorial), and on the other hand the mounting crisis of poverty, going paretic with despair, and rising in the South to a strangled S.O.S.

In Madrid's Royal Palace Franco sits serene on top of this mess, rarely emergent except to be photographed rewarding and congratulating some married couple for having knocked up "sixteen sons for the country," or to inform a visiting journalist, with sublime impertinence, that an Atlantic Pact without Spain is like "an omelette without eggs." He doesn't *govern* Spain; nobody does; the Army and the Police hold the lid down for him, while the Church, aggressively in the saddle, arranges "Spiritual Exercises" for bank-clerks and errand-boys, and the Falange, like Hitler's Brownshirts, tries to persuade the people that it is on their side. Both get worried and dabble in welfare, but not much confidence is felt in their dabblings; and many ordinary people, averse from the path of blood that leads to a Republic, cling to the idea of a King as their best hope. Yet in the Sierras the Republic does still exist—a nucleus of men, organised, armed, and in touch with the towns; when you go by bus through the mountain-villages you see, standing about, large groups of armed police who wage intermittent war on them.

As long as Franco can keep the lid secure on this explosive mess he is all right. In various ways he is sitting pretty. He has none of the responsibilities of union with the West, but gets a good many incidental favours and privileges—private loans and commercial deals. The tide of international affairs, setting against Russia, is setting his way. From outside you don't see the mess, what you see is his remarkable capacity for sitting tight. He kept Spain clear of the war (a boon to us), his Government looks stable, he is respectful to the democracies though not servile. Spanish newspapers, which take a lively, inquisitive interest in all foreign happenings, are constantly quoting tributes to the Caudillo from notable English or American admirers; even the snarling acknowledgments of Mr. Churchill are welcome grist to them. More trade with Spain would be useful, and it looks as if the Spaniards are going well ahead themselves, with this super-speed "articulated" aluminium train they've just invented. Spanish trade bulletins show plenty more evidence of commercial ingenuity and initiative in negotiation: trade deals with the Argentine, with Pakistan, with Ireland, even with Bizonia, a promising hunt for petrol on the Spanish mainland, a 27 per cent increase in the tonnage of Spain's merchant shipping, a big increase in the volume of her foreign trade, ambitious projects of electrification.

Yes, there seems to be not only stability there, but activity. And there is that useful Army "on guard at the Pyrenees"—I should think foreign military observers of the 1949 Victory Parade in Madrid must have felt interested, if only by the ski-troops and parachute-troops—and perhaps there are the beginnings of a better Navy; one hears rumours of warships building in Cadiz and Ferrol. Franco must be a statesman—so concludes this argument from afar—so why not forgive and forget—and include him in our Pacts and Unions? Why not? Well first we can't be sure that this is what Franco wants or would accept. He is trailing a very dirty coat, and decent people outside Spain, who can't see the dirt, are urging, for reasons commercial, chivalrous, or strategic, that we should go after it. But if we stooped to pick it up, we might find it as poisonous a shirt of Nessus to us as Hitler found it. And we cannot, unlike Hitler, escape our consciences. Englishmen who hate the guts of their own Socialist Government would nevertheless, I am convinced, feel revolted by the state of affairs in Spain.

GILES ROMILLY

DOCTORS AND SPONGERS

EVERYONE knows that Aneurin Bevan made mincemeat of the Opposition when they debated the Supplementary Estimates for the National Health Service; but most Socialists, especially defeated candidates at the County Council elections, have a feeling that the triumph was strictly personal. The cost of N.H.S. could, in fact, be cut substantially without any loss of efficiency, and with no sacrifice of anything but trading profits and the greed of a section of those who batten on the service.

First, the eye service is costing too much. Admit the right to necessary spectacles: a very large number of people are getting spectacles that are unnecessary and even harmful. Any patient can go to his doctor and demand a "sustiffikit" for an eye test. (The word "demand" is used advisedly. If the demand is refused, the patient can and will change his doctor. Doctors are paid so much a skull, and the customer is always right.) The form is taken to an optician who tests the eyes at a fee about equal to the doctor's annual pay for looking after the patient. Opticians need not be highly skilled. It does not take many years (as for a doctor) to obtain their "qualifications." They are, however, the arbiters of need for spectacles. Often enough, by advertisement, ("Headaches? Nerves? Have your eyes tested!"), or by letters to old customers, they have created the demand. After examination the patient gets a prescription for spectacles. I have yet to hear of a patient who did not need at least one pair. He may take his prescription to any "ophthalmic" or dispensing optician. As a barely variable rule he takes it to the person who has diagnosed the need. Another profit is netted.

All eye-testing should be done by ophthalmic surgeons, or at least by doctors specially trained in the work. The latter was the minimum standard accepted by any of the fighting services. Opticians should revert to their proper and skilled task as spectacle-makers. It may be argued that it would be months before a person could get his eyes tested. Since it now takes from three to six months from examination to completion of spectacles there is something to be said for thinning the stream of prescriptions and giving the makers a chance to catch up. When ophthalmic surgeons are sole eye-testers they should no longer work in rooms provided by an optician—a practice which the B.M.A. has already condemned as "undesirable."

Medicines and appliances also are costing a great deal too much. Once again, the demand is being created by those who make a profit from sales. Apart from wigs, brassieres and corsets, whose free supply is in many cases ridiculous, advertised nostrums and gadgets are frequently demanded by patients, and it is not unusual for the advertisement to advise the patient how to "get it on the N.H.S." "You are entitled to it free," or "Ask your doctor how to get it," are typical phrases. We all know that the patient is, in law, only "entitled" to that which his doctor advises and prescribes. Many patients, however, believe that they are entitled to what they want, or at least to what they can get; and, in the country at least, a doctor cannot court a reputation for being disobliging.

The retail chemists, again, are in a position to create demand. Olive oil is an example. This useful and expensive supplement to the fat ration was once a favourite medicament in certain gastric ailments, and doubtless there are some doctors who still prescribe it spontaneously. Many people buy it for domestic purposes or for reputed cosmetic properties. Commenting to chemists on its cost, and adding that they would like to afford it more often, they may be told: "But you can get it on the N.H.S. You should ask your doctor for it." Once again an honest man is put on the fiddle; the doctor muzzles his conscience or loses another part of his income, and a little more grist comes to the retailer's mill.

Many of these abuses would be abolished if doctors could afford to be honest. Only those who have private incomes, live in densely populated places or work unopposed in isolated districts can afford it at present. Doctors should be allowed to change to a fixed salary if they wish it. There are, admittedly, snags: some people, for instance, are lazy. But there are salaried workers in many other jobs; the educational system has not yet broken down, newspapers are still published somehow, banks rub along after a fashion—all with workers on fixed pay. A salaried doctor can give his patients what they need, not what they demand. He would be able to refuse unnecessary remedies and even unnecessary certificates. Huge sums would be saved, rationed goods would not be hogged by the greedy on medical grounds, and malingering "on the club" would be minimised.

It must be said in fairness to the great majority that it is only a small number of people who are cheating. Those who use the N.H.S. honestly have nothing to lose by its being tightened up. In fact, they have a great deal to gain in reduced taxation and in the fact that their doctors could spend more time on the sick and less on satisfying the cupidity of a handful of spongers.

D. R. CARGILL

THE FLOATING VOTE

How anxiously all parties ride
In platform-plank built boats,
Hoping to skim the flowing tide
Of all its floating votes!

ALLAN M. LAING

SO THEY SAY . . .

Not since the wedding of Tyrone Power in Rome (of which occasion *Time* observed that "nothing like it had been seen since Brutus stabbed Julius Cæsar") had the Press such a use for "colour" writers as they had last week to cover the nuptials of Miss Rita Hayworth.

Preparation

Daily Mail, May 26:—

Mr. John Hyde, the star's Hollywood agent, was all agog to-day. Said he: "It's a fairy story come true, see? It's the happy ending. Sweet American girl wins Oriental prince. And all America is pulling for her. In fact," said Mr. Hyde simply, "it's colossal."

Star, May 26:—

Two hundred litres of scented essence have been poured into the bathing pool of the château. Special guards will be on duty at the wedding feast to ensure that no guest falls into the scented water by accident. . . .

Daily Express, May 25:—

Dress Note: Rita will wear a skin-tight white satin wedding dress "departing only slightly from the classical conception."

Daily Express, May 26:—

Rita has decided on ice-blue crêpe-de-Chine. . . .

Evening Standard, May 26:—

In the town hall at Valluris, where the wedding will take place . . . workmen are . . . scraping a 5-year accumulation of Communist political posters from the walls.

Evening News, May 25:—

Rita Hayworth will have her honeymoon in India.

Daily Express, May 26:—

Travel note: There are no honeymoon plans.

Daily Express, May 28:—

Rita and Aly plan a month's honeymoon, divided between London and Paris.

Daily Mail, May 27:—

Prince Aly arranged the menu for to-night's wedding-eve dinner. The dishes were named after Rita Hayworth's films. There was "Cover Girl" soup and "Carmen" fish, the dinner ending with "Lady From Shanghai" sweets and "Gilda" strawberries and cream.

Consecration

Evening News, May 27:—

The mayor recited the service, and Rita, who has been taking French lessons, answered "Oui. . . ."

The Star, May 27:—

The wedding of Hollywood's No. 1 cover girl to the Prince who is heir to a kingdom of five million subjects was a wedding of the people, for the people, and among the people. . . .

Sunday Express, May 29:—

Not only has Rita become a "princess"—which other Hollywood girls have done before her—but she has become the daughter-in-law of a god—which no other star of the films has ever done.

Daily Express, May 28.

The mayoral address ended: "This is a great day for Valluris, a town of working-class people previously famous only for pottery and orange-blossom perfume."

Celebration

Daily Worker, May 28:—

RITA HOOKS HIM AS VIOLINS PLAY

Amid an unprecedented concentration of generals, millionaires, society dames, eastern despots, eleven dispossessed princes and princesses, Rita Hayworth finally got her man yesterday. . . . The guests drank several hundred bottles of champagne at three bars, while seven fiddlers in white coats wandered around the grounds of Aly's sumptuous villa . . playing "La Vie en Rose," Aly's favourite tune.

Re-Orientation

Sunday Pictorial, May 29:—

ALY ADVISED ON HOW TO BE HAPPY WITH RITA

AUTOLYCUS

LETTERS FROM TWO ISLANDS

Isle of Wight

. . . . We have just returned from a short visit to Copenhagen, where we went to see M. and for me to do some theatre business. Did I ever tell you that Denmark was the first foreign country I saw? Thirty-six years ago, when I was a lad of eighteen, I wangled out of somebody a free pass on a butter boat running between Goole and Copenhagen. This meant that I signed on as supercargo or something of the sort, and all I had to pay was about half-a-crown a day for my food aboard ship. How delightfully simple it all was in 1913! You put ten gelden sovereigns in a little purse, and off you went. No passport; no currency palaver; no silly questions. You could travel without anybody and everybody wanting to know when and where you were born, and when you arrived at the other end, still without telling everybody when and where you were born, you could live handsomely on a few shillings a day. Perhaps all this business of everybody telling everybody when and where everybody is born helps to put up the cost of living.

Copenhagen still seems to me a pleasant city—and I have been there several times since the war—but of course it is not the place I knew thirty-six years ago, when I was all innocence and bloom. Then it rose from the sea like a city in a fairy tale. The very coffee and rolls at breakfast were an enchantment. (I paid eighteenpence for my room, I remember, and ate my breakfast in a sunny courtyard—ah the lost sunlight of eighteen!) Where now is that honey-coloured swarm of girls at which I stared, day after day, in a vague amorous dream, like some youth in a poem by Tennyson? (Nobody ever did the languors and lushness of late adolescence better than Tennyson. Perhaps some of his severest critics have never arrived at late adolescence.) *That* Copenhagen, smiling in a June that had not known a whole generation of young men rotting among the barbed wire, is not to be found in Space but in Time.

But there was a link between the two Copenhagens. It was Tivoli, for which I have therefore a special tenderness. I spent two happy evenings there, last week, and was much admired for my marksmanship at that stall (and what genius first thought of it?) where you smash kitchen plates. Clown, Harlequin, Columbine, are still there in the Pantomime Theatre, and pleased me as much last week as they did thirty-six years ago. Whatever happens to British Industry, Culture, and Our Way of Life, we should insist upon having a Tivoli, complete with a Pantomime Theatre, in our 1951 Exhibition here. I would gladly undertake to produce one of the harlequinades myself. And to spend several pounds at a glorious plate-smashing stall, where all the crockery is clearly labelled *For Export Only*.

J. does not like the North and always sighs for the Mediterranean landscape and style of living. But somewhere inside me is an old Jute who feels he is going home when we travel northward. Yet no matter where I am in Scandinavia, I am never quite in the right place. I never cry "This is It." Haunted perhaps by some memory of a child's picture book, I am never satisfied by reality up there. *It* is still round the corner somewhere. In the Mediterranean countries I know I am a stranger, so gape and grin and enjoy myself. But in Scandinavia I am half at home yet cannot find what I want, and though pleased am puzzled, a trifle distressed, a Viking looking for his village. These attitudes, which have nothing to do with the conscious mind, are very strange.

In that stretch of coast between Copenhagen and Elsinore, where so many charming villas peep between trees at the milky-green Baltic, life seems at first to the visitor from larger and more sinister communities to have achieved a smiling perfection. Why not—I ask myself—stay here for ever, not too rich, not too poor, writing just enough to keep the pretty roof intact and to provide beer and schnapps, herring and veal cutlets, for a few friends? But I know it would not work. After the three-ringed circus of our larger societies, more dubious, dangerous but also more glorious, existence in this clean little democracy would soon seem dull. Not that the Danes themselves are dull; though it is odd that these cheerful extroverts should have had Hamlet thrust upon them, to say nothing of Kierkegaard and Hans Andersen. But I should soon feel restless among them, pleasant though they are. And the meals last too long up there. When a man lights a cigar after the first course, and the waiters apparently seek some other temporary job, I fall into despair.

Do you want to know about pigs? We visited a pig farm not very far from Copenhagen. We were shown round by a handsome young man, wearing overalls and a rakish light trilby, who looked like a pig farmer in a musical comedy and might have extolled the virtues of the Danish bacon pig in waltz time. Every day his men collected several tons of swill (I paid for a good deal of it myself, last week) from a dozen restaurants in the city, and it was chiefly on this rich stuff that he fed his hundreds of pigs, which he did not breed but merely fattened for a few months. They were crowded, smelly and sad, into scores of small pens; and are never allowed out, to root around and have a good piggy time. Fond as I am of bacon, I could not applaud this grim intensive method. This was a pig factory and not a farm. And the pig, who is after all a sort of poor relation of our species, deserves something better.

I keep pigs too, in an optimistic, amateurish fashion; but they lead a better life than these poor Danish creatures do. If they had votes, they would vote for me and not for that handsome young man, even though he is feeding them mixed grills and cream cakes. (Or perhaps they wouldn't—a sad thought!) And I believe it is not mere sentimentalism that makes me suspicious of these high-pressure factory methods in agriculture. I have been assured, almost tearfully by some enthusiasts, that if we adopted the "battery" system for our poultry, we should obtain far more eggs and also cut down our labour costs. But when I see our hens scattered about the fields, pecking away and expressing their mysterious personalities, I feel cheerful and proud; whereas if I kept passing a row of buildings in which I knew some hundreds of them were closely confined in tiny wire cages, I should look elsewhere and try to think of something else. Moreover, I have a feeling that there is a catch in these merciless high-production systems, which treat living creatures as if they were so many bars of steel or bales of cotton.

Nature, I feel, cannot be outraged in this fashion. There is an old goddess somewhere, furious at this lack of piety, who sooner or later will do something queer to these "battery" eggs, this concentration camp bacon. And on this faith, no matter what the overdraft may be, I take my stand.

The ship that brought us back to Harwich was filled with professional footballers who had been touring Scandinavia. These gladiators, some of whom command more space in the press than you and I will have until the day after we die, seemed to me unusually pleasant young men, very different from the rough-and-tough professional footballers of my youth. "Grand lads! You could take 'em to Buckingham Palace," said one of their directors to me at a match I attended in Copenhagen. We taught the world this game of Association Football, and now the world—your own country a notable exception—plays and watches it with enthusiasm and occasionally beats us at our own game. This fact, which often plunges our sports pages into mourning, is not hard to explain. Our footballers go touring at the end of their season, when they are tired, play as tourists on grounds very different from the grounds they are used to, often with a ball much lighter than ours, and sometimes they are beaten by sides who have been trained by old British players who—as I saw the other night—work on sounder lines, using the old short-passing game, than our own coaches do. But most of these professional footballers, though playing for English teams, are Scots. There must be many a small town in Scotland that has as its chief industry the production and export of professional football players. Sometimes the vast crowds at Wembley and elsewhere, roused to a frenzy of delight or apprehension when the outside left of one side beats the full back of another, may easily be cheering two lads from one Scots village who learned their game at the same school.

This game, I repeat, has captured most of the world. From Stockholm to Buenos Ayres the crowds are yelling in the same fashion, often using the original English terms. Now consider the things most youngsters like these days—film, radio, aviation, ballet, swing, football, tennis—and notice what an international background these things have. The natural drift of our time is towards internationalism. (A playwright sees this. I have often to think in terms of theatres all over Europe.) But—and I hurl this very large *But* not at you but at so many of my correspondents—this does not mean we are now ready for a World Government. The fabric of our world society is not strong enough. When it is, and not before, then it will be possible to establish a World Government. What so many of these well-meaning folk do not see is that you do not begin but end with government. What they ought to do is to keep on putting some sound stitches into this fabric, and to shine a bright light on the people who are for ever quietly tearing it, the out-of-date politicians, the officials who do not want to take any risks, the editors who make capital out of national prejudices. (I mean, of course, serious prejudices, which make men afraid and angry, not the cultural and social differences that are half the fun of life.) Here an organisation like Unesco is a good test. It smokes the fabric-tearers into the open. I do not refer now to the people who may dislike the way it is organised and some of the things it does, but to the people who seem to hate the *idea*. And they include many gentlemen who in their after-dinner oratory are always ready, with tears in their eyes, to speak of their devotion to international brotherhood.

J. B. PRIESTLEY

The Arts and Entertainment

THE FLORENCE FESTIVAL

FLORENCE has planned its Maggio Musicale of 1949 along lines which forcibly suggest a military operation, with the general public in the role of the enemy. The city's first move was to adopt the classical military device of concealment. Security was strict, and a week or two before D-day not a word had slipped through the defences. Towards the end of April a few thin slips of paper were at last allowed to circulate from hand to hand; they contained no details either of the music which was to be played at the concerts, or of the singers who were to appear in the operas; but they did show the dates of the principal events, and these were both inconvenient and unexpected. English and American tourists, who are obliged to think ahead about hotel and train reservations, and who had innocently guessed that Maggio meant May, discovered that many of the most interesting productions could be heard only in June. A rumour was simultaneously put about that all the seats had been already sold to residents and speculators. But what finally broke the spirit of the intending patron was the diabolical method of spacing out the attractions.

At Edinburgh or at Salzburg (and for both these autumnal festivals, full programmes have been available for months past) the visitor who stays for a week or ten days can hope to hear most of the principal items in the programme. Not so at Florence. Here, each opera is put on for two or three performances in the same week, and then dropped for good; even the open-air performances of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* at the Boboli Gardens are all squashed together into nine days at the end of June. Consequently, if you stay a week and contrive to hear one opera and one concert, you are doing about as well as can be expected. A crazier plan for attracting custom it would be hard to imagine; and yet I am told on good authority that there is method in the Florentine madness; the scheme is said to be a deliberate attempt to persuade visitors to spend more time in Florence than they otherwise would. To what extent the horrid plot is successful I can't say; but so long as it lasts the music-loving traveller may as well wipe the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino off his map.

It is all a great pity, because we English love Italian opera, and the great opera houses of Milan, Rome and Naples are almost always closed throughout the holiday months. At Florence, moreover, apart from the immense attractions of the city itself, the Maggio Musicale offers (or used to offer) a rare chance of hearing Italian operas which lie outside the stale conventional repertory. Thus, in 1933 the scheme included Spontini's *La Vestale*, Rossini's *Cenerentola* (a heavenly little masterpiece), Bellini's *Puritani*, Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* and Verdi's *Falstaff*. The 1949 programme, though less interesting and weakened by the absence of Verdi (a *Don Carlo* had been contemplated, but was dropped), contains at least one revival of extreme rarity and interest: Rossini's *Siege of Corinth*, which is to be given three times in early June.

The Festival opened with a new opera of Pizzetti named *Vanna Lupa*, which seems to have had a lukewarm reception; this composer, who writes with unmeasured enthusiasm about the cantilenas of Bellini, is curiously reluctant to give rein to the lyrical impulse in his own productions. For the latter part of May the Sadler's Wells Ballet occupy the Teatro Communale with *Cinderella* and four shorter pieces; and they are to be followed by the Vienna State Opera in a Mozartian cycle. The instrumental contributions consist of a few scattered orchestral concerts, and recitals by four outstanding pianists: Serkin, Gieseking, Michelangeli and Casadesus—the last in a very exquisite, if occasionally too cool, Chopin centenary programme. The remaining Italian contributions are a trio of one-act operas by Cimarosa, Pergolesi and Pergola Cherubini in the exquisite white-and-gold Teatro della Pergola, and an elaborate—a rather too elaborate—production of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* at the larger and much less attractive Teatro Communale.

In any Monteverdi revival the crucial question is that of transcription. The surviving texts of *Orfeo* contains little more than the voice parts, an unfigured bass line and occasional verbal indications of the instrumentation. From these, and from the list of instruments prefaced to the earliest edition, it is evident that Monteverdi intended a richly varied and, for its period, elaborate orchestral layout. There is only one vocal passage in which the instrumental parts are fully written out, and this is the wonderful sustained arioso in which Orfeo lulls old Charon, the boatman of the Styx, into slumber—and then himself seizes the oars. Here, between each line of the declamation, pairs of violins and cornets and a "double harp" resound in rapid imitative scale passages, producing a strange impression of depth and mystery, as though all nature were intent on the sublime incantation. But not for a moment is the voice part itself obscured by even the most tenuous of instrumental tracery; whereas almost everywhere throughout Signor Frazzi's transcription (which was used at the Communale) the vocal line was submerged beneath a thick sauce of string tone, usually moving faster than the voice, sometimes in thirds, occasionally in octaves. The result was something which could never have been tolerated in 1607: the declamation of Striggio's poem was often inaudible, and the supremacy of the actor-singer was destroyed. Only occasionally did voice and words penetrate the theatre; and when Signor Frazzi allowed this to happen, the effect was noble, pathetic or exciting, just as Monteverdi had intended.

The transcription of Monteverdi in terms suitable for modern performance is admittedly a vexed question; and one may regret this soft and luscious retouching of a masterpiece without demanding so austere a version as that of Benvenuti, used for the complete Italian H.M.V. recording of the opera (a set which ought to be made available in England). In one respect Frazzi may claim to have followed the composer's intentions more closely than Benvenuti. The part of Orfeo (as later in Gluck's opera) was written for a castrato; Benvenuti assigns it to a baritone, but in Florence it was sung (more appropriately, I think) by a contralto, Mme Fedora Barbieri, who possesses a strong, vibrant, expressive voice of a timbre similar to that of Ebe Stignani. Her performance had moments of nobility; almost as fine, with few exceptions, was the work of the remainder of the long cast, of the chorus and of the orchestra under Antonio Guarnieri.

The stage settings of Giorgio de Chirico, which seemed to have been inspired by the rich browns and clear blues of a Poussin landscape, were uniformly harmonious and beautiful. As so often happens, the costumes, though nominally from the same source, proved unworthy of the sets; and the dancing, like so much Italian dancing, amounted to little more than arty wrigglings, writhings and posturings. But, in Guido Salvini's production, the stage picture was often memorable; for example, the messenger's slow approach along an upper path to announce the news of Euridice's death, and the scene by the Styx, which I have already mentioned—a strange landscape beneath red clouds shaped like bats' wings, with the grim ferryman leaning drowsily against his black oar.

The effect of the opera as a whole was dissipated by the usual enormous Italian intervals, which on this occasion were slightly longer than the music. A simpler version, more concisely played at the Teatro della Pergola, might have left an indelible impression of greatness. As it was, we seemed to be contemplating a noble fresco, over-enthusiastically restored and serving principally as the background of an important social occasion.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

MUNICH AND VIENNA—II

WRITING about Tintoretto's *Mars and Venus* (at the Munich exhibition) in my first article I referred to the various forms in the composition as "silhouettes." And this shows us one more point of contact between Tintoretto and Braque; for both painters tend to reduce their images of solid forms to something which is essentially a flat area bounded by a continuous outline. None of the tonal modulations on the body of this Venus are so strong as to conflict with the superbly bounding line which carves her figure out against the wall, the draperies and couch. And the same is, if anything, more true of the figure of Susanna in *Susanna and the Elders* at the Vienna show. Her immensely luminous body *floats* in the dark green air of the garden. The rippling dark flat shape, which is Vulcan's left leg, is seen against the pale pink of a quilt, and is an even more obvious indication that Tintoretto's thought tended towards the flat silhouette. Indeed this picture is made up of very carefully designed, flat areas, of sharply contrasted tone, set in opposition; so that one passes all the time from a light flat patch to a dark and then to a medium one, and back again. Modelling is not allowed to outweigh or overpower the linear definition of the forms: indeed it seems to be assigned to this or that part of the design on condition that it merely enriches shapes already marked out and defined by the rippling network of outlines. It is almost the equivalent of those slabs of richer, different textures (wood graining perhaps) with which Braque or Picasso elaborate a piece of their designs whose form has already been determined.

And then, there are certain wonderful distortions. For instance, all the upright lines defining the windows and wall in the top left of the composition are tipped out of the perpendicular, to the right, and made to lean inwards towards the centre of the picture; while the door-post in the top right background leans also to the centre—that is, to the left, *against* the leaning windows. One window frame behind Vulcan's shoulder is the sole vertical upright in the whole design; the only visible uprights of the various beds all lean to the left. The result of the conflict of all these leaning verticals is that space is created in the room and round the figures. Again, the dark marble lozenges of the floor show Tintoretto's sense of pictorial space getting the better of his knowledge of the progressive diminutions of perspective. The second and third row of lozenges are tipped up slightly towards the spectator and are much larger than the nearest row. All these instinctive modifications show Tintoretto as a master of all-over design in a sense that his contemporaries do not seem to have approached.

For some reason Ghirlandaio escaped my list last week: whoever painted them, the centre panel and the two wings of the altar from S. Maria Novello, Florence (at the Munich show) are magnificent for their pure colour. The black-grey folds of *St. Catherine's* skirt are, in themselves, quite startlingly austere yet rich and harmonious: to these are added the off-whites found elsewhere in her dress, the red of her book and the dull gold of her one protruding shoe. Then *St. Lawrence*, opposite her, is resplendent in a pink gown and a green cloak with gold lining: and someone's boot in the centre panel glows in my mind like a molten ingot—a yellow-gold foot outlined with a soft, wide, even line of luminous, vibrant crimson. This is the glow of tempera. But this play with pure clear colours, which often extend, without much modulation, over large areas of the picture surface, is what primarily gives life to the Ghirlandaios. They do not show anything like the plastic design used with such dramatic effect by Botticelli in the *Pieta* (in I think the same room). Botticelli's *Pieta* is a pyramid of scissoring forms; all are hard and smooth, like metal: its rendering is desperately precise and perfect, but its colour is dull. One cannot help seeing, incidentally, what a fascinating thing precisely this composition would become if handled more loosely—one might imagine Derain doing this; he is the only living exponent of many things we value in Botticelli, strange as the idea at first sounds. But, of course, the whole extra-aesthetic meaning of this picture would be lost in a transcription of any kind: it is clear that the agony of the whole scene depends for its expression precisely upon this harrowing perfection of detail in the criss-crossing forms.

In both exhibitions the Giorgione is a disappointment. The Goya still life of a plucked turkey and a black old frying pan is most exciting: sudden variations in the tempo of the brushwork, so typical of Goya, are perfectly demonstrated here. Careful, slow, minute touches build up the pallid neck and rolling head; then suddenly, immediately behind, huge slashing strokes of black break out, bending the pan into the shape most proper for the design. The seven Munich Rembrandts of the Passion are so horribly framed in black and are, in any case, so obscured by yellow dirt that it is difficult to do them justice. They at least make us rejoice in our own cleaned Rembrandts. At the Vienna show Rembrandt's *The Large Self-Portrait* hanging near to *The Small Self-Portrait* (head), both marvellous, show how his judgment of the closeness of his eyes could vary without in the least changing the character of the face presented: the artist's left eye is half an inch nearer his nose than his right in the small self-portrait. It is just one more instance of the way pictorial statement may twist the physical laws of its subject matter—indeed must twist them. However, to me the great mystery of Rembrandt is this: why, in the apparent absence of any devices of surface design, do these dark canvases satisfy every aesthetic appetite so completely? And I imagine the answer must be that Rembrandt's feeling is of such depth, intensity and complexity that it bestows upon his centrally placed forms a sort of explosive vitality. So that although the broad framework of a head conforms to the physical reality it is nevertheless charged, in the course of painting, with a thousand formal suggestions, a thousand thrusts and counter thrusts. I think because these are so varied and so powerful the final complex form—the finished head—needs the surrounding cushion of darkness to absorb, as it were, the rays of its power.

And now there is little space for suggesting that Rubens, the giant bestriding both shows, was a marvellous observer but a poor composer whose calligraphic hand filled his backgrounds with scribble, reducing, say, a balustrade and pillar to the flimsiness of a cardboard décor. Or for remarking the unexpected greatness of Van Dyck, more especially as a colourist: the greens of the drapery, the blacks of the cloak and the gay, soft blues and greys in the sky in the portrait of *Prince Karl Ludwig* (Vienna) are unforgettable. Nor can I do more than ecstasize monosyllabically over Velasquez's portrait, in pinks and greys, against a soft viridian curtain, of the tiny *Infanta Margareta Teresa*: or over Vermeer's *The Artist in his Studio*, almost conceived in terms of inlaid wood: or Rubens' small *The Park of the Château de Steen*, as sweet as Renoir—all three at the Vienna pictures.

PATRICK HERON

TELEVISION NOTES

ONE of the most charming programmes for many a month was a by-product of a major event. The cameras had gone up the River to record a regatta, and when that well-organised set-piece was over they lingered on to compose an impromptu impression of a tranquil riverside evening. For fifteen minutes they picked up and wove together exquisite pictures of drifting boats, small boys fishing to no purpose, lovers sauntering along the tow-path and the declining sun sparkling on the water. Not a word was spoken, and so cleverly was the ambush prepared—with telescopic lens and other devices—that none of the human participants seemed aware that they were being photographed. It was a sincere and moving little pastoral, relaxed and refreshing. Such scenes, you may say, could be just as well provided in a cinema news-reel. But no. The difference, of which one was constantly conscious, was the quality of freshness and immediacy, the sense that we shared, in a living moment, the same mood which was falling so tenderly upon the distant river. This is one of the values which separates television from the cinema and endows it with such potent spontaneity.

The same difference will be abundantly revealed this summer when television is bringing us vivid field days in the open-air. A canned news-reel of a week-old cricket match is far poorer in the vitamins of imagination than an instantaneous transmission of a battle in progress between New Zealand and M.C.C. I welcome, by the way, the adroit and reticent manner of the cricket commentators—Jim Swanton and Brian Johnston—and their perfect understanding with the cameramen.

Nothing could be more apt for television than *I Have Been Here Before*, J. B. Priestley's speculation on the fourth dimension—six people, one sitting-room and the tension of an engrossing argument. It came off admirably. *Charles and Mary*, Joan Temple's play about the Lambs, was another example of that intimate, miniature drama which goes so much better on television than the thronging play of movement. Seldom were there more than three characters on the scene, out of a modest total of a dozen. There were no vistas, no elaborate sets, no extensive deployment of action. In its small domestic interiors there was enough elbow room for the poignant story to be developed without seeming to be forced through the eye of a needle. It is to be hoped that television will increasingly accept the scale and conventions of its medium, instead of whoring after Lyceum panoramas seen through the wrong end of a telescope. There is some evidence that this sense of congruity is appreciated at Alexandra Palace. Another recent instance was the delightful selection from the revue *Oranges and Lemons*, which wisely omitted the more spacious manoeuvres of the stage production and picked those items of the original that gain most from being seen at close quarters.

The diligent quest for a television funny-show has so far met with scant reward. After many fanfares of advance publicity the serial circus called *Cuckoo College* has been mounted, but despite a script by Ted Kavenagh, creator of *Itma*, it made a desolate beginning. Poverty-stricken in its invention, unbelievably banal in its witticisms, this jerry-built contraption was redeemed by one personality, a comic called Norman Wisdom. His rubber visage has that bereft expression of the traditional Fool, his antics the intense unpredictability of Grock or Harpo Marx. In technique he is perhaps too prodigal, and will be more effective when he discards some of his stratagems. What he most lacks is a mad world all his own, a local and peculiar habitation (as Grock's was), but if he discovers an orbit for his lunacy he may prove a fantastic success.

W. E. WILLIAMS

THE MOVIES

"Now Barabbas," at Warners
"Yellow Sky," at the Odeon, Leicester Square
"The Contact Man," at the Plaza

While the argument over *The Snake Pit* swings to and fro, only the mildest side-taking will divide those who go to see *Now Barabbas*. Capital punishment—a question that only recently has stirred Gallup polls and made Home Secretaries think again—becomes here the subject not so much of argument as of gentle, well-bred persuasion. A cross-section of prison life during the days leading up to a hanging: this could have provided a movie of stark revelations and unbearably rising tension. Such would have been the Hollywood method, and, indeed, the method most natural to cinema. A very different approach has been chosen by the English makers of *Now*

Barabbas: a stage play has been adapted, the reticences and interlocking dialogue of the theatre have been kept, a few domumentary touches have been added, and the camera has been set prettily at play. In the result we have a well-made, exploratory, inherently decent film that never lets us down but rarely enables us to forget its theatrical origin.

Within these limits it does pretty well. The drama has two main centres: a "mess" room of a dozen prisoners, and the condemned cell, with its two warders playing draughts, a visiting chaplain and the dreaded official appearances of the prison governor. Almost without exception the prisoners are models of good behaviour: in fact, one wonders in a shocked manner how they can possibly have got where they have—a mystery not altogether solved by the case-history labels attached to each. The murderer (Richard Greene) seems quite irreproachable, except that in a drunken demob mood, under great provocation, he has killed a man. Little human touches and some first-rate acting reconcile us to these paragons of the inside life. If the murderer himself is a little too good to be true, the nature of his ordeal is quietly and forcibly evolved. Mr. Stephen Murray gives a brilliant performance as the friendly young Welsh chaplain, and the conversation of the two warders beautifully sets one's nerves on edge by its understatement. The prisoner's last hours and moments are kept off stage. When the sentence is carried out, at the traditional eight of the morning, only the tight-lipped nervousness of the officials and the wave of hysteria that sets men hammering on their cell doors, bring home to us the tragedy and the unstressed moral. A serious theme, very decently—the word will recur—treated. Gordon Parry's direction is sensitively alert. And half a dozen actors and actresses, besides those already mentioned, carry their small parts triumphantly; especially Sir Cedric Hardwicke as the Governor.

The background of the average "Western" has improved enormously in recent years, thanks largely to John Ford. *Yellow Sky*, directed by William Wellman, is considerably above average. A bank hold-up, very much in the mode, is followed by a galling march across salt flats (beautiful to the eye), and the discovery of a derelict town in which are living only an old man and a trousered girl with a gun (Anne Baxter). Miss Baxter, giving a most convinced performance, very nearly rids the part of some inherent absurdity, but with gold-digging, cabin-stalking and duels among the rocks the film ends considerably less well than it began. It seems to make a point of bringing in all the latest Western ingredients, hall-marked by Ford and Houston, but there are imaginative hints in the direction.

A widely shared interest in the contact man led me to expect more from the film of that name than perhaps I should have expected. Imagine my disappointment when I found that the contact man in question (Ray Milland), after some mysterious dabblings in forgery and State politics, was only our old friend Lucifer in modern guise. But how glum, how fallen! Poor old Nick. He vanishes away in the river mists the moment his victim, whose soul he has bought, displays a Bible.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Italian Opera, at the Stoll

The Music, Art and Drama Society are presenting a six weeks season of Italian Opera at the Stoll, where *Tosca*, *Falstaff*, *Bohème*, *Rigoletto*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Barber of Seville* take over from the Ice Carnival. The company and productions are much the same as they were last year, only they seem more at home among the caryatids and plush of the Stoll than they were in that felt-deadened cave of the Cambridge. Also this time we have the pleasure of Clemens Krauss as joint conductor with Erede, though for an all-Italian repertoire he may seem an odd choice. He is an admirable conductor of romantic German opera, as he reminded us during his visit with the Vienna Opera Company two years ago, but the romanticism of *Falstaff*, or, for that matter *Tosca*, is very different, and he did not entirely catch the Latin idiom. The singers, accustomed to a more lush, Italianate conception of the music, appeared to find his authoritative baton unsympathetic. Nevertheless, he extracts from the orchestra—which used to be this company's great failing—some surprisingly adequate playing. (Perhaps his firm hand would give us what is needed at Covent Garden.) As for the singers, Stabile is as good as ever in *Falstaff*, and in *Tosca* his Scarpia remains a wonderful characterisation, though his voice is no longer sufficiently strong. This is particularly noticeable at the end of Act I; one regrets Rothmuller, who rose so beautifully above the chorus. Franca Sacchi has developed her voice considerably, perhaps as a result of her success at the Scala. Her singing is still a little coarse, though no longer vulgar, and she has thrown off the influence of Caniglia, which hampered her style so much in *Tosca*. Her Mistress Ford is well sung, and she fits far better than one would have expected into the ensembles.

Degas, at Roland, Browse and Delbanco's

An interesting show of pastel and charcoal drawings by Degas contains, in addition, a few of the artist's small bronzes of standing nudes. It has been said that Degas was saddened by the suspicion that Renoir never very much cared for his painting. But did Renoir see these small bronze figures of women and, if so, did he not think more highly of them than of the drawings from the same hand? What we might call the pedestrian pace of his line was Degas' main limitation. It was a line that too often remained true to certain aspects of photographic reality. Where Renoir would bend at will the trunk of a tree or the wainscot of a room, to make a happier space for his figures, old Degas just couldn't get away from the literal facts of the matter. He felt bound to record things exactly in the position in which he saw them: he didn't have to copy their precise texture, like Sargent; but the angle of an arm, a chair back, the dado—this had to be correct. And these correct angles were often the ruin of his compositions. In drawing his nudes you feel he first got the outline down "correct": and then, but only then, let himself go in those very expressive hatchings and stipplings of variegated colour which give his works their real character. It is not surprising if the superb plastic force of these hatchings is felt to be somewhat in conflict now and then with an outline running against their rhythms. We feel that it is only in the bronzes in this exhibition—and in one drawing, number 25—that Degas really breaks free from the intellectual dictatorship of his outlines and creates form freely—like Renoir. In the large pastel, number 7, the raised left arm is somehow unconvincing: is this the result of the tyranny of a correct eye? It looks a good deal better than it feels.

COUNTERFEIT

Tight-drawn by ligatures of frost,
A million lives are bound in one,
And that, a vague inactive ghost
Brooding beneath a dwindled sun.

As if, no field-work left on hand,
Too busy Earth at last should sink
Down on a twilit sick-bed, and
Have nothing left to do but think,

And in that strange new exercise
Of passionless and single thought
The angled fret of contraries
Should round, and rub away, to nought:

The lion, steel in velvet hid,
And glazed the fire-bank of his eye,
With the presuming lamb and kid
Content unleonine to lie:

Held in a hushed suspense of wing
Indifferent the hawk, the dove—
No breaking now, nor broken thing;
No agony; nor any love.

G. ROSTREVOR HAMILTON

Correspondence

LOCAL ELECTIONS

SIR,—I have read with interest the letters of two unsuccessful Labour candidates, and as a successful Conservative candidate for both rural and parish councils, I venture to send you my observations.

I did a good deal of personal canvassing and enclose a copy of the election address which I used. You will note that no extravagant promises were made.

I agree with Mr. Griffith that the rural electorate clings somewhat to an independent view in local elections and many people here deplored the introduction of a political set-up. Others recognised that it was now the order of the day and accepted the challenge of our opponents. My general conclusions, deduced from an interesting, instructive little campaign, were as follows:—

(1) There were no gentry or folk of the kind referred to by Miss Croker in the picture at all in these parts. As regards Mr. Griffith's point about well-known local personalities, I would mention that, although a native of these parts, I have been away over 35 years and have only been back for 18 months, so I am comparatively unknown. Nevertheless, I got in with only 12 votes less than my colleague, who is a well-known local man. The best Labour candidate (also a local man) was 109 votes behind me. All this was in an electorate of about 800, of whom roughly 520 went to the poll.

(2) There was a genuine desire to find qualified and conscientious candidates, who would give their minds seriously to the problems awaiting them.

(3) Although not bearing directly on local government, an important factor in the defeat of the Labour men was the backwash of a disappointing Budget.

(4) Many inhabitants gave me to understand, in language truly rural, that they thought that the present Government had fallen down on their job and had thoroughly disorganised the country.

(5) Many small owner-occupiers of bungalows and small holdings expressed apprehension of further regimentation and frustration from a bureaucracy out of touch with country life and its needs.

(6) There was much concern at the growing cost of local services in an area of low rateable value (1d. rate in the whole rural district only produces £200), and a fear that absorption into a larger area of urbanised character would only add to the burden. Whatever be the causes, the result has been to place control of the rural district council firmly in the hands of the Conservatives.

H. A AUTY

27 Station Road,
Eastchurch, Sheppey.

SIR,—Your "London Diary" on May 21 appears to put the blame for Labour's defeat in the recent municipal and County Council elections, on Mr. Morgan Phillips: "He has neglected the morale of the Party's active supporters."

As an "active supporter" of the Labour Party for 20 years and a W.E.A. lecturer, I have had the opportunity of sounding over fifty people who since 1945 have voted Labour, and at the recent elections refrained from voting or voted Tory. Every one of them, except two, explained their attitude as being due to Sir Stafford Cripps' ill-considered Budget, and several also mentioned the clumsy manipulation of the surcharge on electricity. The Cabinet's support and approval of the Budget, and its enforcement by a three line Whip has, with I think every justification, led many to feel that our leaders are entirely out of touch with the people they represent.

E. W.

CONSUMERS AT SEA

SIR,—I was pleased to see THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION take notice of Co-operative affairs, but find Jack Bailey's reply unconvincing.

The Co-operative pioneers started with a desire for fair trading and dreams of Socialist production. The "Co-ops" have done a grand job in raising the status of distribution and the distributive worker. They have been pioneers in pasteurisation, social security, education and the encouragement of thrift. The expansion of their spheres of interest has been

constant and steady and does them credit, but it has not been rapid enough. As far as establishing a Socialist Utopia goes, the Co-ops would appear to have missed the boat. Private enterprise has not stood still. Private enterprise has discovered that cleanliness and fair dealing and lower hours with higher wages can pay a dividend. The retail Co-operative Societies are still (after more than 100 years) little more than efficient organisations for the distribution of capitalist goods. This is not Socialism.

It is fair to add, I think, that although Co-operative conditions of employment once compared very favourably with conditions in private enterprise, this is no longer necessarily so. Many large firms have more comprehensive welfare schemes, give more encouragement to technical education and pay higher wages than do the Co-ops. When the Rochdale pioneers accepted women members in their own right, they were pioneers in female emancipation. This has not been followed up by equal pay or equal opportunity in employment in the Co-operative Societies. The C.W.S. has not used its full facilities for basic technical research as it might have done.

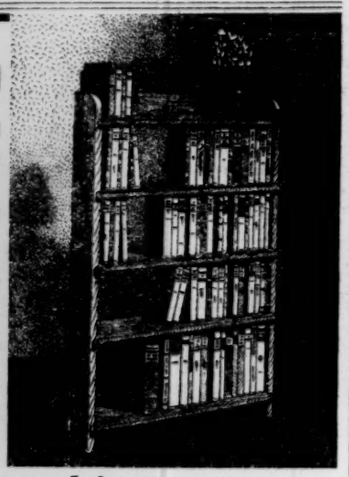
It is to be hoped that the Co-operative Societies will continue as distributive societies, consumer controlled. But if our political democracy so decides, why should the goods distributed not be, most of them, nationally produced and planned? Does Mr. Bailey prefer to pay tribute to monopolists? Is that his way to Socialism?

There are many definitions of a better or worse democracy. One test is surely the proportion of people who exercise their privilege of voting. Another is that employees should, by works committees and the like, have some share in management. Still another that there should be scrupulous control of publicly owned goods and money.

It would be a sad thing if Co-operators were persuaded to exchange parliamentary Socialism, here and now, for the mere probability of increased Co-operative production after another 100 years in the "shifting" boardrooms of the Co-operative Societies.

30 Cliff Road, Leeds, 6. KITTY BEANLAND (Co-operative Employee)

PHOENIX



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CLOSED SHOP

SIR,—Mr. S. E. Graham fails to draw the line between what is the primary object of a trade union and what is secondary. Whatever the political character of a trade union—and that is a matter which must in the end depend on the views of its members—its primary and fundamental purpose is to protect their trade interests. That the "closed shop" is a perfectly proper method of implementing this primary object has been accepted by the Courts, which, on the other hand, have never conceded a right to prevent the employment of a person on the ground of his political opinions. The "Closed Shop" is legitimate self-protection: the action of the John Lewis Partnership is political persecution.

The argument that the "closed shop" is a violation of individual liberty is particularly wide of the mark. Let Mr. Graham and those who share his view answer this plain question: Which is the more repressive—to compel one workman to join a union, or to compel two or three hundred of his workmates to work alongside with a non-unionist?

4 Paper Buildings, Temple, E.C.4. HARRY SAMUELS

MENTAL HOSPITALS

SIR,—Mr. Ritchie Calder is so afraid that *The Snake Pit* will deter suitable persons from entering mental hospitals for treatment and prevent recruitment for the nursing staffs, at present sadly below strength, that he considers that the interest which has at last been aroused in a subject so long taboo should be gently lulled by a description of a mental hospital, which he admits to be "one of the best half dozen in this country."

This would be deplorable. The whole problem of the mentally sick requires the greatest possible public interest, if its solution is to be brought nearer. It is a subject on which a Royal Commission is urgently required, and we shall not get it, unless public interest is sufficiently roused to demand it.

One of the difficulties of this subject of mental hospitals is that the evidence of those who have been patients is always dismissed with a knowing nod, unless of course it happens to be favourable. The public should realise two important points: that the opportunities for ill-treatment of patients in mental hospitals are greater than for any other body of people, not excluding prisoners; and that the ordinary methods of hospital inspection are quite useless for discovering cases of ill-treatment.

I have had experience in the last few years of a number of mental hospitals from the inside as a patient, and believing as I do that no progress can be built except on truth, I have to state that I have seen brutal and callous treatment, that I have been made to associate with patients very much worse than myself, that I have known what it is to live under a régime of fear, in which those who were able to ingratiate themselves with the nursing staff received special treatment.

That such conditions are not ubiquitous I myself have reason to know from other more humane treatment. If I do not dwell on this it is not for lack of gratitude, but because I wish to do what I can to reform conditions, which trouble me, and I think should trouble others. VERITAS

TOO OLD AT FIFTY

SIR,—I would like to thank publicly Mr. J. B. Priestley for his "Letter From Two Islands" in your issue of May 14, on behalf of the men of 50, regarding what he so aptly calls, "this age business."

I know of several cases of Englishmen with most outstanding qualifications and well known in their particular lines of industries, etc., who have been more or less "redundant" since the end of the war. They are in splendid health in every way, first-class brains and abilities, did a grand job during the war, but are quite unable to find a suitable job where they would be most needed because they are near or just over 50.

I know of one case who has been on the waiting list of several branches of the Ministry of Employment since 1945 and had only from them a temporary job of six months' duration in Germany. He and family have had to live on the little capital they had, and, in sheer despair at wasteful and soul-destroying inaction, he has become a jobbing gardener at £5 a week less tax. This is no complaint against the wages, for this is regular in the profession.

It seems incredible, at a time when every energy and capacity is needed here if we want to go through successfully.

Several M.P.s have been repeatedly told of this state of affairs with no results whatever. They do not seem interested.

Quite a few of us did put our faith in Labour, looking forward to a more intelligent and understanding grasp of the nation's needs. It does not encourage us to "walk with them" any farther.

I am entrusting this to you in a last hope, before it is too late, that the large publicity of your paper will help to change a shameful, pitiful and very wasteful state of affairs. M. F. P. M.

Taplow, Bucks.

ST. THOMAS MORE

SIR,—May I be allowed to correct several inaccuracies in Mr. Trevor-Roper's review of Mr. Ames's book on St. Thomas More (NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, May 28th)?

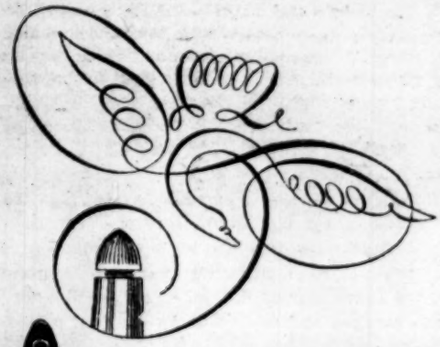
The statement that More "despised monasticism" is amazing. Early in his youth he spent some time at the London Charterhouse and considered entering the Carthusian Order and becoming a priest. He decided to remain in secular life mainly through doubt of his capacity to preserve lifelong chastity. In other words, More's decision not to become a monk was due to respect rather than disdain of the monastic ideal; he imagined in fact, that he was not good enough for it. There is evidence to show that More never overcame his regret for what he may have considered as his "gran infinito." Margaret Roper, who washed the (a strange garb for one who "despised monasticism"), hairshirt which her father wore as Lord Chancellor heard her father say in his last days in the Tower "... if it had not been for my wife and you that be my children, whom I account the chief part of my charge, I would not have failed long ere this to have closed myself in as straight a room, and straighter too ..." (Roper's *Life*, p. 76, Hitchcock's edition of 1935). I fancy that Mr. Trevor-Roper's over-hasty generalisation is based on More's frequent denunciations of individual delinquent monks.

The alleged inconsistency between More, the author of *Utopia*, and More, the defender of Catholic orthodoxy, is a problem which Mr. Trevor-Roper has created for himself as a result of his apparent inability to realise the distinction made by the mediaeval and modern Catholic mind between the spheres of natural reason and Divine revelation. As R. W. Chambers pointed out 14 years ago, Utopia is an attempt to construct an ideal policy from no other material than the behests of natural reason. This had been a common pastime in the Middle Ages after the discovery of Aristotle's *Politics*—a pastime in which men such as Peter of Auvergne, 13th-century bishop and scholastic philosopher, saw nothing inconsistent with orthodoxy. In attributing inconsistency to what was, for three centuries before More, a quite common attitude, your reviewer is plainly jousting with shadows.

Oxford. JOHN B. MORRALL.

YE OLDE BRYTYSHE RAYLWAYES

SIR,—The introduction on British Railways of Tavern cars, dressed up in the finery of ye olde worlde, is indeed a sad reflection on the general level of taste in this country. Obviously this is the result of leaving such delicate matters in the hands of people whose judgment is quite out of touch with the trends of our time. Common sense is unfortunately a rare commodity and, until it becomes more common, recourse must be had to using specialists whose training and experience can be relied on to give a lead as well as to avoid shocking blunders. What has been done cannot be undone, but if someone in high authority is wise he will appoint an individual to be responsible for what is called "design." With that done there will be a good chance of cleaning up one part of the untidy railway garden. LEONARD BEAUMONT



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WORLD REVIEW

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

In 1529 Cardinal Wolsey fell from power in England and in the next ten years the whole structure of known society seemed to crumble. In 1535 Sir Thomas More went to the block; in 1536 Reginald Pole burnt his boats in Italy. The two most distinguished living Englishmen had repudiated the new order. Emperors and Popes were gladdened on their thrones: they pronounced More a martyr and made Pole an ambassador; and they declared, with gloomy satisfaction, as their co-religionists have since declared, that humanism was dead in England.

Of course it was not. All his life Henry VIII remained an enthusiast for learning and Thomas Cromwell, who had himself travelled in Italy and read Machiavelli, was the patron of another generation of scholars—men who would face the problems from which More and Pole had recoiled. It is with this second generation of humanists, the link between the Oxford humanists and the Elizabethans, that Mr. Zeeveld's excellent book* is concerned—in particular with two of them, Thomas Starkey and Richard Morison.

The story begins with Wolsey, in the new college which he had founded at Oxford to commemorate his magnificence. Thither he gathered picked young men from every source, even from Cambridge. Being bright, some of them were radical, and the Cambridge group infected Oxford with some undesirable doctrines which seriously disconcerted the Warden of New College; but Wolsey, with a founder's partiality, turned upon them a blind, indulgent eye. Next year he fell and falling, appealed for his tottering handiwork. "In the way of charity and for the love that ye bear to virtue and *ad bona studia*," he wrote to one of his servants, now the King's secretary, "be means to the King's Highness for my poor colleges, and especially for the college of Oxford. Suffer not the things which by your great learning, study, counsel and travail hath been erected . . . to be dissolved or dismembered"; and to another servant, now the King's chief minister, he made the same appeal for his twin foundations of Oxford and Ipswich.

Henry VIII refounded Cardinal's College as Christ Church, but it took time, and in the meantime what were those hand-picked scholars to do? Some attached themselves to Wolsey's son, that exquisitely pampered young man Thomas Winter, in his successive households in France and Italy. But Winter, in spite of the care bestowed upon his education and finances (at fifteen he was Dean of Wells, archdeacon of Richmond and Provost of Beverley), seemed equally incapable of either becoming learned or remaining solvent, and most of the scholars converged, directly or indirectly, on that great centre of English humanism, the household in Padua of the King's cousin, Reginald Pole.

In all Europe at that time there was scarcely a university to compare with Padua. There, in the tolerant Venetian Republic, Pomponazzi taught philosophy and Leonico Greek, and Vesalius, by his experimental surgery, was causing a renaissance in medicine. Thither the Venetian aristocracy, by the law of the Republic, sent their sons to study; thither enthusiastic English scholars travelled from Oxford and Cambridge, sent by their own teachers who had also studied, in their generation, at "the Athens of Europe."

At nineteen Pole had gone to Padua with a splendid allowance from his royal cousin and letters of introduction from his Oxford tutors, Linacre and Latimer. There he lived, in appropriate comfort, and in his house English and Italian humanists met. Bembo and Sadoleto, Priuli and Contarini and Caraffa were among his Italian friends—liberal Catholics who would have reformed the Church if they could; but a formidable decision was to divide them, as it was to divide his English friends, into persecutors and victims: for the intellectual crisis of the century struck indifferently throughout Europe. And in the same house lived a growing cluster of English scholars, mostly from Oxford, many from Cardinal's College, and several of them from those bright young men who had infected the new foundation with sudden reforming doctrines. Many of these young men were poor and of humble birth, but in that almost royal house they lived together, studying Galen and Aristophanes, Euripides and Plutarch—and of course that newest, most useful subject, the Roman Law—in complete intellectual equality.

For what were they studying? Not for the sake of study. That medieval concept no longer appealed to the new, uncontemplative world of the Renaissance. They sought not to glorify God but to perfect man. And once perfected, for what purpose did they mean to use that laboriously achieved and finely polished instrument? Of course, to govern the affairs of the world. Humane scholarship was the secret of success: it had broken down the old barriers of birth and wealth; it had liberated politics from taboo; to some it had even revealed a new method, a method which shocked the old and excited the young, the analytical method of Machiavelli. Through humane study Wolsey and Wolsey's numerous servants had risen to power and fame. Pole and his friends studied to the same end. It was an agreed convention: agreed by themselves, agreed by the King who was paying their expenses and looked to Padua for another generation of judges and bishops, councillors of state and ambassadors abroad.

In 1534, "judging all other secret knowledge not applied to some use and profit of others to be but a vanity," Thomas Starkey wrote from Padua to Thomas Cromwell offering his services. He returned to England to become chaplain to Pole's mother and within two months he was chaplain to the King, an important architect of the new world. Within two years he had persuaded Cromwell to fetch Richard Morison also away from Pole and Padua. Never had there been such a market for talent. The monasteries were being dissolved—they could plan schemes of social reform and education with the proceeds. The Church was being reformed—they could devise an Anglican *via media* for its reformation. Ultimately they might bring back to England the most distinguished of possible apologists, their friend and master Reginald Pole.

Starkey assured Cromwell it could be done. For two years he pressed Pole to declare himself on the important issues of the day. He wrote to Padua describing, with enthusiasm, the new England. There were crabs of course: the Carthusians (and Pole's earliest teachers had been Carthusians) had been executed. Starkey explained it away. Meanwhile would not Pole, who had championed Henry's divorce in the Sorbonne, continue his services? The King would be lavish of rewards, "for sorry he is that there among strangers, without profit to your country, your virtues should be so utterly drowned, and like as in a dream vanish away." But Pole was strangely silent. Ever since his visit to England in 1530, when Cromwell had shocked him by preferring Machiavelli to Plato, and he had immured himself perversely in a Carthusian monastery, he had remained wrapped in enigmatic doubt. He was turning away from humanism, back to contemplation, asceticism and the unfashionable heresy of "perpetual philosophy." He was in the clouds, said his friends in Padua, "undergoing a great change, exchanging man for God." Then, in the sixth year of doubt, he complied with Starkey's request. He gave the King his opinion. It filled a whole book of uncompromising denunciation and bitter personal invective. Then he gathered up his robes and left Venice for Rome, to be a cardinal.

Pole's bombshell shattered the humanist group around him. Some, like George Lily, followed him in his retreat. The prudent trimmed. Starkey was dismayed. Shocked at Pole's behaviour, he remonstrated with him against "your detestable unkindness towards your prince"; discredited at Court, he begged Cromwell not to impute to him any part of Pole's disastrous folly; and yet he could not altogether renounce his former master: first among his misfortunes, he told the King, was "the perpetual loss of the conversation of so faithful a friend"; the hero of his last book, the *Dialogue* which he dedicated to Henry VIII, and which is his greatest claim to memory, is still Pole; and when he died, two years after the blow, a broken and divided spirit, in his will he remembered, as a humanist, his Oxford college, the poor scholars, and Lord Montague, the brother of Reginald Pole.

No such doubts tormented Richard Morison. If Pole could bite the hand of his host and patron, so could Morison. "The kindness of Signor Pole," he had written in 1534, "has rescued me from hunger, cold and poverty." Two years later he was to become the King's propagandist-in-chief against "Mr. Traitor Pole" and his associates, a successful literary champion of the new order, dashing off his pamphlets against the Pilgrims of Grace "in my boots . . . in an afternoon and a night." When the King, grown inveterate in tyranny, liquidated Pole's two brothers and aged mother (she had been indiscreet in her embroidery), Morison was there with a prompt and learned justification. He was rich and successful, Sir Richard Morison, M.P., the King's ambassador in Germany, a political thinker of real weight and learning. Well might he preach equality of opportunity, the virtues of a new, aristocracy, an aristocracy of talent, an aristocracy of Morisons, to replace the old aristocracy of privilege, the aristocracy of the Poles.

Who betrayed whom in this strain of politics, ideas and loyalties? The question is irrelevant. An intellectual crisis faced a group of men and dissolved it. History is indulgent to the defeated, and in liberal minds there is always, and rightly, a suspicion against those who, with ready theories of consistency on their lips, leap nimbly and profitably on the rising tairway of a new despotism. Pole is a tragic figure. More and more he sank into mysticism; his friend Caraffa, as the most bigoted of Popes, became his most relentless tormentor; and he died, the last Roman Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury, a suspected heretic and a universal failure. The humanist tradition was to be continued not by him but by the brassy Morison and the young men whom he collected around him: Roger Ascham, his secretary, the teacher of the Elizabethans, who read Machiavelli with him in Germany; William Cecil, their statesman, who also, perhaps through Morison's influence, studied Machiavelli's *Discorsi*; and those great Cambridge humanists who shared the exile of them all in the days when Popery and Pole had returned to England—Bishop Ponet, John Cheke, Sir Thomas Smith.

H. R. TREVOR-ROPER

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DEATH AMONG THE DENTURES

The Body. By WILLIAM SANSOM. *The Hogarth Press.* 9s. 6d.

William Sansom has been one of the few modern writers who carry out the artist's job of taking the ordinary ingredients of daily life and re-forming the pieces into a design that has a kind of "new" look. Sansom's charwomen, Sansom's station restaurants, Sansom's boots and shoes, his fireman's hoses, his black-coated clerks, his millionaires, his cat's tails. . . . These things are not ordinary, there is something not quite correct about them, in fact they are weird to speak frankly. But they are Sansom's paraphernalia. He is not, in certain ways, particularly original—his debt to Kafka, for instance, has always been too noticeable, and then there are the Sitwell echoes... yet still—he has created a Sansom Universe.

I think one secret of the particular world he has created is this: he has changed the inanimate things round into people, and the people into inanimate things. That is to say he has filled his tables and chairs, his weather, his trains and buses with human passions; he has filled them with intentions, sinister, or voluptuous; he has given them moods; tragic or chirrupingly blithe. He has given them souls. Conversely his people have become marionettes.

He has liked particularly to take some great, smoky city, put it on to the operating table, peel aside the upper flesh and peg it down with forceps, and then reveal, violently struggling amid the tangle of railway lines and tunnels, or in the great, humming, beehive blocks of flats, generally trapped in the vast mechanism of urban civilisation, his "people." Or shall we call them "humours," or noxious and virulent insects, for they are grappling with each other fiercely, always harrying and harried, forever chasing each other through naphtha-flared marshalling yards and gaslit station buffets—engaged in a perpetual, warring activity—these red and white corpuscles of the city?

And almost everywhere, and almost at all times, it is the formalised, conceptual aspect of the scene that engages Sansom. From the indecency of the naked human personality itself he turns away, (with what emotion I know not), and takes up, instead, the canvas mask and the gilded proscenium arch.

So far Sansom has been a choreographer of brilliance, his short story form having fitted his concepts like a glove. Now, however, he has tried something new. A novel.

The Body is the story of a middle-aged hairdresser, Henry Bishop, and his wife Madge, and the awful garage-cad Charlie Diver, whom Bishop suspects of seducing his wife. A conventional triangle.

These people live in the suburbs, next door to each other. The vulgar Charlie Diver, with his silvery tinted wireless set, his Eastern junk and mantlepiece animals, and all the catch phrases proper to one of the lads of the village, lives in a boarding house kept by a lady, stately and stout, who "drinks." In the same boarding house also is Bradford, author, (the only person with thought processes in the book). There is also Norma, a girl who is having a flirtation—perhaps something more—with Charlie Diver, and four or five others who form a chorus and fill up party scenes at the pub and on the river.

Upon these types, for types they are, and with this "setting" of suburban gentility, our choreographer gets to work and gives us his ballet.

The Body has been chosen for the *Evening Standard's* book of the month, and is a book to be reckoned with. But I must confess that I found it wearisome. I kept saying to myself—but must not a novel, unlike a short story, deal with human beings?

And I have found no reason to change my view, set out above, that Sansom seems to be allergic to real flesh and blood. Human persons, I stick to it, seem to give him some sort of horrid hay fever. He simply cannot take them. When presented with them, as here, he sneezes them out again as quickly as he can, so that they land in a kaleidoscopic shower of bits and pieces all over his urban landscapes, a few grinning back teeth upon the tennis lawn, a crawling centipede smile working its way across the mauve silk *pouffe* in the drawing room, here a bit of rubber cheek, scarlet-veined like marble, there a few beads of sweat, yonder a glaring celluloid eye. Only the hearts seem to be missing.

And again, the magical Sansom intellectual faculty for "rendering down" situations and activities into their essences (I have here used a culinary term and presume everyone nowadays understands the process alluded to)—where, oh, where is that? The old human vitality and passion of the landscape, the weather and the objects—where? The river on which Henry Bishop and his friends picnic isn't really a Sansom river at all I swear. Just a nice, ordinary one. The pubs, the houses, the shops—why they haven't got that "new look" any more!

F. R. Leavis, in his interesting literary study, *The Great Tradition*, says, on page 14, talking of George Eliot, that she brought, "a radically reverent attitude towards life, a profound seriousness of the kind that is a first condition of any real intelligence . . . ."

I deeply agree with this postulate that Mr. Leavis lays down. And it seems to me too obvious that Mr. Sansom at heart despises every character in his book—no, worse—does not ever begin to take them seriously. (Madge, it is true, does not behave unkindly to her husband—but Oh!—Mr. Sansom's opinion of her all the same!)

The narrator himself, in his jealousy, and in his gloating revel of bitterness, is forced to carry the whole story on his shoulders. And still . . . even for him does the author care a rush? Even if a novel is only a satire, even if it is meant to be merely a laugh, still the author must have profounder feelings about his characters than one gets here.

Well—of course one judges this author, just because he is one of our most intelligent and stylish writers, quite without mercy. And that is why I am confessing that I have been, in the last book of this usually so fascinating artist, disappointed.

JULIA STRACHEY

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THE STATE CONTROLS ART

Musical Uproar in Moscow. By ALEXANDER WERTH. *Turnstile Press.* 6s.

"Music," writes Mr. Werth, "is the art, one might have thought, least liable to provoke discussion in terms of ideology and social significance." Perhaps for this reason it has been for twenty years past the most flourishing of the arts in the U.S.S.R. The Russians were particularly proud of their composers—"It was somehow generally accepted by everyone in Russia, whether they liked symphonies or not, that the Soviet Union was miles ahead of any other country in this branch of music"—and four in particular, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Khachaturian and Miaskovsky, known as "The Big Four," were hailed as the chosen vessels of the mingled spirits of eternal Russia and proletarian Communism. These men were built up as national figures; the publication of their symphonies was treated as a national event and "all Moscow" could be seen at their first performances.

These deliberately fostered reputations were built up in pursuance of an avowed theory of art to which Mr. Werth does full and careful justice. Soviet theorists have always emphasised the social role and social content of Russian art. "Art for art's sake," as Mr. Werth points out, was never part of the Russian tradition. (Consider, for example, Tolstoy's answer to the question, What is Art?)

Mr. Werth defends the theory of the "social significance" of art as a salutary corrective to the exaggerated individualism, the "social remoteness" of art in the West. "A self imposed sense of purpose in art and literature" is, he thinks, a remedy for the pessimism and incomprehensibility which he detects in bourgeois art. The application of "the social theory" demands that art should above all things be popular. If it possesses no appeal for the people, it obviously fails of its social effect; "Art for the people, not for the *élite*" was the slogan.

Early in 1948, the Big Four were suddenly assailed on the ground that their art was not popular but "formalist." They were arraigned by the late Zhdanov at a special Conference of Musicians called by the Central Committee at which they and their music were violently denounced, and the findings of the Conference were subsequently published by the Central Committee on February 10, 1948, in a Decree of Music. As a result they found themselves in disgrace. Their posts were taken away, they were also deprived of their honours and they have had difficulty in securing performances of their works. (Some musicians were arrested.) Meanwhile the guardianship of Russian music passed officially into the hand of the composers of light operas and imitation folk songs. These extraordinary occurrences are recorded with great verve and in great detail by Mr. Werth.

As one reads the proceedings of the Conference and the wording of the subsequent Decree, it is apparent that the difference between approved and disapproved music is conceived in moral terms: is, in fact, the difference between virtue and vice. Music apparently falls into two sharply differentiated categories. The virtuous is "normal," "humanist," "realist," "Russian." It has a "high ideological content"; it reflects "the live intonations of Soviet reality"; it is "organically connected with the people." Also, rather surprisingly, it is "in the great classical tradition." Vicious music is "formalist," "anti-people," "false," "ugly," "vulgar," "idealistic." It is characterised by "atonalism in the most extreme form," "disharmony," "acute and 'neuropathic' egocentricity, total un-Russianism in its themes." Also, rather surprisingly, it is

"arch-revolutionary." Above all, it is "formalist" and, in case we do not know what "formalist" means, Mr. Werth defines it for us as "an insufficiently whole-hearted attitude towards Soviet Communism." "It is," he comments, "no longer an aesthetic but a political concept," and that he is right Zhdanov's admonition to the Big Four, "your political hearing must become as acute as your musical hearing" seems to testify. For the improvement of his "political hearing" the "formalist" composer is told that he must "struggle against this tendency to distort, against this laziness, this lack of courage; and in this struggle" it is significantly added "he should be greatly helped by the stern, but friendly care shown him by the Party."

Criticism which is relevant depends on the ability of the critic to put himself, at least imaginatively, at the standpoint of that which provokes his criticism, of seeing, in fact, the other person's point of view. But this in the present case is far from easy. These proceedings are so alien to our notions that one's bewilderment is that of a visitor from another planet asked to give his views. It is, then, with the feeling that they may after all be beside the point that I offer three observations.

First, I, alas, dislike the little I have heard of the music of Shostakovich and Prokofiev; it seems to me noisy and dissonant and I have difficulty in detecting any underlying pattern or continuing melodic thread in what strikes my untutored ear as a medley of sound. But I recognise that my ear is, indeed, untutored. I recognise, too, that unless one is exceptionally musically perceptive, new music always strikes harshly upon one's ear; history records that it has done so again and again in the past, nor is there any reason to suppose that the effects of new music which is vital and creative music are different in the present. To appreciate it one must hear it often and one must also have a trained ear. That the common man can easily appreciate great art is a delusion. Listen, for example, to Sir Joshua Reynolds:

> Taste does not come by chance or nature; it is a long and laborious process to acquire it. It is the lowest style only of arts, whether of painting, poetry or music that may be said in the vulgar sense to be naturally pleasing.

Now, in the Moscow proceedings the only criterion, as Mr. Werth points out, was the popular. "The people like this?" Right, then it is good and healthy. "The people don't like it?" Then it is bad and diseased. This is to assess the value of a work of art by counting heads; one has only to envisage the application in this country of a similar criterion to the music of Bach and Jerome Kern respectively, to realise its absurdity.

Secondly, Zhdanov seems to have placed himself in an awkward dilemma. A word, "epigonism," constantly appears. It is defined by one speaker as "the worst form of traditionalism," as "blind imagination." "Our problem," says another, is "how to avoid 'epigonism' while still following in the classical Russian tradition." It is, indeed, a problem.

Zhdanov's condemnation of "formalism," his censure of the Big Four for "ignoring the best traditions of Russian and *Western* (my italics) classical music which they treat as 'out of date' and 'conservative,'" his demand that composers should write "like Glinka and Tchaikovsky" means, as Mr. Werth says, that "twentieth-century Soviet Russian music should speak the language of nineteenth-century Czarist Russia." Perhaps the oddest part of the whole affair is this requirement that Soviet composers should revert to an idiom that expresses the ideology of the hated bourgeois culture.

Thirdly, there is the issue of tolerance. For my part, I do not, as I have remarked, enjoy the music of Shostakovich and Prokofiev, but I would die in the last ditch for their right to compose it and for the right of other people to hear it. I abhor the sickly ooze of sound that drips out all day and every day from the radio under the name of "light music," yet I would no more dream of suppressing the crooner than I would of banning Mozart. This attitude is with us instinctive and almost universal; we have imbibed it with our political mother's milk. Here are a couple of examples taken at random from a recent issue of this journal. Mr. Priestley quotes the Home Secretary to the effect that though he had never been to a night club, "the fact that he did not want the facility was no reason why he should deny it to another person." Freedom of speech, Mr. Gorer wrote, "undoubtedly includes the right to speak and publish nonsense, even pernicious nonsense."

Now for a couple of remarks in a different vein. "They tell me that we have no literature now in France. I will speak," said Napoleon, "to the Minister of the Interior about it." "So long as there remains in Germany any neutral or non-political art," Herr Goebbels declared, "our task is not ended."

It is difficult to deny oneself the pleasure of pointing out the family likeness between the attitude of the Central Committee and those of the bourgeois dictator and the Fascist beast.

C. E. M. JOAD.

WILLIAM HICKEY

Colonnade. By TOM DRIBERG. *Pilot Press.* 15*s.*

Before the war the *Daily Express* lived off our nerves. It was a daily Salvation Army meeting conducted in a Fun Fair, with a special line in distorting mirrors and in hoop-la rings that never fell straight on any single object. Except for Beachcomber there was nothing for grown-ups. As the world became angrier in the Thirties and the gossip columns became more idiotic—"The Aga Khan, looking bronze and fit," quotes Mr. Driberg—Lord Beaverbrook saw that what the dazzling paper needed was the occasional shadow; the shadow of an interesting fact, or an emotion not intellectually disreputable. Out went the gossip writers and the Hickey column was started; in Mr. Driberg (William Hickey, the first) Lord Beaverbrook's good genius discovered a columnist of natural petulance and learning, who could use the sawn-off gun of contemporary journalism, quote the classics, and from time to time, puncture the fantastic policy of the paper.

One would expect these ephemera, excellent though they were on the day, to look stale and taste like blanket when collected in a book years later. That has not happened. The selection Mr. Driberg has made in *Colonnade* is, if anything, more readable than when its items first appeared. The period covered is ten years, 1937 to 1947, and only the air-raid notes, it seems to me, are for same odd reason dated. Perhaps, as a character in one of Miss Elizabeth Bowen's stories shrewdly said, "they" (the air raids) will have no literature." The "little-he-knew" air of the pre-war material has now taken on dramatic irony; and one or two of the war reports, a voyage in a Norwegian ship across the Atlantic, a trans-Atlantic flight, and the narrative of a torpedoed seaman who tried to sail to Greenland, are reporting of the highest class. A book like this depends on Mr. Driberg's unpredictable curiosity, his flair and, above all, on his alert and restless melancholy; but his clinching quality is that he writes good English with the touchiness of a grammarian. To-day's paper is already stale, when Mr. Driberg is not, because its stories have been written for the stock response and are poorly written. This passage indicates Mr. Driberg's quality and his interest:

> Most evenings, when the sea was calm enough, we played bridge with the captain, a majestic and engaging sea-dog from Western Norway—massive, bald, rosy, hard-spitting, enigmatically stertorous, with a robust, ready laugh, a formidable pipe, and the general air of a shrewd, well-fed cardinal. He showed a sturdy, sceptical wit. Our boatswain, it was related, had been in a ship that went down "in 25 seconds."
>
> "Someone," grunted the Captain, "had the presence of mind to time it."

NICHOLAS POLUNIN

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ALLMAN

The qualities required in a columnist are set out in Mr. Driberg's introduction. They are: a strong, coherent, philosophical view of life, not usually explicit, but disclosed between the lines; prejudice, the temperament of the gadfly; a disposition to consult the large Oxford Dictionary; a manner of writing in which "style is the feather in the arrow not the feather in the cap" and the adverbs and exclamation marks are trimmed back. The pen is to be preferred to the typewriter. As for subject, "the columnist must be interested in a large variety of special subjects." The real secret is not to appeal to the majority but "to appeal to as many minorities as possible." Eschew domestic life, go abroad at least once a year, suspect publicity and train a nose for the libellous and the unreliable. I am not sure about the very last requirement. We used to have one exhilarating columnist whose success lay in a genius for guessing beautifully wrong in a sinister way. Perhaps, in being sinister—"things are not what they seem"—lies half the art.

Things were not as they seemed, for example, at the Coronation. Mr. Driberg enjoyed the chaotic rehearsals. The Archbishop rose out of the muddle, crying out heartrending sentences like, "*Where* is the Lord of the Manor of Worksop?" Mr. Driberg observed that among the Gold Staffs, the R.C.s made better canopy-bearers than the Anglicans who had never had to carry a canopy in their lives. A good reporter never neglects useless information: Mr. Driberg measured his seat and put down the figures. In a way, this deflationary, factual reporting reflects the cynicism of the period; I doubt if Mr. Driberg would have "done" the Royal Wedding ten years later in the same manner. If he had, he would (I suggest) have been out of date. Things were not as they seemed at Mosley meetings, at Merry del Val's Franco-ite jamborees, or with the Buchmanites. These failed to stop Margaret Rawlings from begging them publicly, at one of their soul-spillings, to be modest. And how was history made in Prague? Lord and Lady Runciman dine in the hotel lounge with Hodza, surrounded, by real spies, would-be spies, the people who have come to see spies, the eavesdroppers of eavesdroppers. The tactless orchestra drowns all their chances.

Time goes on fiddling while the world burns, or does not burn. Thomas Campbell, hynoptist, told Mr. Driberg to count twelve and the feeling would go out of his legs. To annoy *Express* readers, he quoted the whole of a Wordsworth sonnet, after listening to King's College Choir; for private pleasure he tracked down a bogus William Hickey who was masquerading at a suburban bar. ("Why did you do it?" I insisted. It was in order to impress his girl. "I wanted to *be* somebody," he said). Mr. Driberg visited the troubles in Palestine. He investigated identical twins in New York and went on to smell out the facts of a lynching. He was at the Pope's funeral, he was angry at Le Touquet—a remarkable Fascist stronghold—and happy at Boulogne. He went—but Mr. Driberg was never still: his eye jumped from folly to horror, his mind moved from irony to indignation. The life of the lost decade streams in plain confusion through our memories, so mixed with our personal lives, that it has the appearance of a long, unpunctuated sentence. Mr. Driberg runs back over that extraordinary and misleading sentence and, laconically, malignly, indignantly, punctuates it.

V. S. PRITCHETT

DRAMATIC IRONY

The Dry Mock. A Study of Irony in Drama. By ALAN REYNOLDS THOMPSON. *Cambridge* 21s.

This book makes a clear, sane survey of a subject that has sometimes puzzled critics of the drama and led them into slipshod comment; it was worth writing, if only for that reason. But Professor Thompson brings to it also of a maturity judgment that at once guards him against obsessions and leaves him free to take an independent line where (as in examining the work of Euripides) he has arrived at convictions. He inherits from the philosophers and critics a mass of conflicting theory on the nature and function of irony in life and in art, and from the drama itself an entangling wealth of material of which only a small proportion is strictly relevant. The task he takes upon him is precisely that of sifting this evidence in the light of those theories. This sometimes involves him in what may seem to Englishmen a tiresome amount of quotation from authorities not all of whom are visibly superior to the writer himself; for, unlike the critic who was "At his best in quotation," Professor Thompson has his own workmanlike way of summing up the issues, and a specific skill in definition. Indeed, it is this which will probably constitute for most readers the chief virtue of his book.

The irony inherent in life and circumstance is for him "an incongruity that arouses both pain and amusement." The ironic mood or attitude is, in general, a blend of sympathy and detachment; "ethically neutral," it is an "emotional dissonance"; "the wry smile is the visible sign of irony," distinguishing it from the mood of comedy on the one hand and of paradox on the other. In literature it takes on a bewildering variety of tones to one of which, Romantic Irony, the author gives a special analysis that reduces it to its simplest components. In drama, Professor Thompson recognises three forms of ironic contrast which, indeed, seem to provide an adequate classification of the kinds, while reducing the categories of his predecessors: Irony of Speech, depending on the contrast between literal meaning and implication; Irony of Character, on that between outward seeming and inner reality; Irony of Events, on that between the expectation and the outcome. Any of these may occur in drama, just as they may in fiction or in an observed section of life, but the third, to which the name "dramatic irony" is commonly given, is the one that best serves and is served by dramatic form.

This elucidation of the nature of irony is accompanied by careful analysis of the work and thought of several clearly distinguishable ironists, Socrates, Sophocles, Euripides, Molière, Ibsen, Shaw and Pirandello, and followed by a comparison of the usage of the major dramatists. Some of the conclusions reached in these sections are of considerable interest: Shakespeare is never ironical (in the sense of the term that is here adopted); Sophocles has no prerogative and indeed Euripides may be readily shown to have an irony more profound, complete and varied than his; Ibsen is closer to Euripides in the extent and potency of his irony than any other dramatist and the work of both is instinct with "spiritual irony"; the basis of Socrates' irony is almost the logical contrary of that of Pirandello. The distinction between Aristophanes, Molière and Shaw is made with precision; in Molière comic irony is supreme, in Aristophanes it verges upon sarcasm; in Shaw it is generally incidental, except for the reversal at the end of *St. Joan* in which it is precisely the irony that lifts the play to the height of tragedy: "Thus once at least Shaw uses irony in a grand fashion." At the end of this series of examinations he concludes, and fairly persuades his reader to conclude with him, that "Of all the great dramatists we have found not Sophocles but Euripides and Ibsen to be the chief ironists."

There are moments in the book when a reviewer disagrees with a judgment, but it is noticeable that these moments are seldom part of the author's main argument; they concern as a rule his estimate not of irony but of some other aspect of a dramatist's work. The exception to this is a seeming indifference to or undervaluing of dramatic irony in the hands of Aeschylus. Unless I have gravely misunderstood Professor Thompson's thesis, there is more irony (in one or more of his admitted senses) in the *Choephoroe*, especially in Orestes' speeches on blood-guilt, than in any play of Sophocles except the first *Oedipus*. With some of the incidental estimates

of Ibsen there is still more room for disagreement: the author seems to disregard the subtlety and the skill with which Ibsen reveals the development or unfolding of a character, particularly the rapid unfolding that follows self-discovery. Brand's aspiration, for instance, admittedly dwindles in the course of the play; it hardens and narrows, and Ibsen, making an imaginative exploration of Brand's spirit, sharing its pilgrimage with him, discovers and takes note of precisely that fact; every faculty he possesses as a dramatist is engaged in the task of revealing this process. Something like this happens also in *Peer Gynt*, and the case of old Mr. Werle and Mrs. Sörby in *The Wild Duck* would bear examination in the same way. Rebecca in *Rosmersholm* is one of the most remarkable studies of conversion in drama; not Shakespeare, not Middleton, has surpassed in sympathetic penetration or dramatic skill this study of the rapid yet profound re-constituting of a human spirit.

Side by side with these judgments are analyses, like those of Rosmer and Allmers, which are penetrating and clear. And now and again he points the way to an area of dramatic aesthetics as yet unoccupied but of great promise: Ibsen "has devised a new form of irony—one which so far as I know is unique in him—the irony which uses a complete dramatic action to contrast the 'surface likeness' and the hidden truth." And there is a courteous sanity in his way of referring the scholar, particularly the classical scholar, to the theatre for the amendment of his judgments. For the "total impact" of the play, as we there receive it, is, if not the ultimate test of a play, a valuable corrective and a restorative of due proportion.

UNA ELLIS-FERMOR

POLITICS IN PICTURES

The Liberal Party. By R. J. CRUIKSHANK. *Collins.* 5*s.*

The Labour Party. By W. GLENVIL HALL. *Collins.* 5*s.*

The Conservative Party. By NIGEL BIRCH. *Collins.* 5*s.*

If the results of elections depended on the writing of books and selection of pictures, Clement Davies would be our next Prime Minister. Of the three Party books issued by Messrs. Collins simultaneously in the "Britain in Pictures" series, Mr. Cruikshank's Liberal Party is *primus inter impares* both as regards text and illustrations. Few artists of distinction, apparently—apart from cartoonists—have bothered about British politicians; or perhaps the politicians choose their portrait painters like their slogans for popular appeal. But even here the Liberals gain points for charm. Whereas the Labour frontispiece is Mr. Birley's sartorial reproduction of the Prime Minister in doctoral robes, and the Conservatives give us a formal picture of the old Duke and Peel, the Liberal choice is a delicious study of Mr. Gladstone travelling in a horse bus in 1884.

Mr. Cruikshank, of course, had a much easier task than his rivals. They are both active politicians who have to gloss over some of the truth, whereas he is an editor whose job it is to remind them of it; and secondly, despite the bold face he puts on Liberal prospects in 1950, Mr. Cruikshank is writing about the past, whereas Mr. Hall and Mr. Birch are very much concerned about the present and the future. The Liberal can afford to be an objective historian whereas the Socialist and the Conservative are perforce pamphleteers. Having made all allowances, however, I must state that Mr. Cruikshank's brilliant essay is far the best all-round commentary on the pictures in *all* three books. Liberalism, as he understands it, is the political framework of our parliamentary democracy and he has good grounds for claiming that this framework was created under the leadership of the Liberal Party. If that party has now dwindled, it is because its great creative idea has been successfully incorporated in our institutions.

As Mr. Birch is at pains to point out, the Conservative Party has always been suspicious of great ideas. It has survived countless sacrifices of principle because it has been truly reactionary; that is, it has waited to react to the ideas of other parties. Nor has it been ashamed to trim its convictions to the needs of the hour. Observe, for instance, the convictions of Mr. Birch. Now that the Tories are out of power and a minority in Parliament, Mr. Birch solemnly tells us that: "memories of once having been a hunted minority has made them pacific, abhorrers of force" and he adds later that they "dislike oligarchy or exclusive power whether wielded by an aristocracy of birth or of labour or of industry." We have to turn to Mr. Cruikshank to discover that the Tories ever defended the Veto power of the House of Lords or to be reminded that one of Mr. Bonar Law's messages to Sir Edward Carson during the Curragh crisis read: "Whatever steps you may feel compelled to take, whether they are constitutional or whether they are in the long run unconstitutional, you have the whole Unionist Party under my leadership behind you."

This is no disparagement of Mr. Birch. The Tory Party is the leopard which *can* change its spots and, in this knockabout pamphlet, he is busy on the task of transpigmentation which Disraeli before him accomplished by a similar romantic rewriting of history. But distortion can be carried too far. Was it really wise to credit Neville Chamberlain with social legislation which "leaves the present Socialist Government panting behind?" Was it expedient, at a time when Lord Woolton is exploiting disgruntlement for all he is worth, to write "If you meet anyone of whatever class who is continually sweating and whining about his condition you may be sure that he is on the Left?" If this were really so, there would be very few Tory votes in 1950.

There is one point, however, on which Mr. Birch is refreshingly candid about the Conservative tradition: he makes no attempt to conceal the strength of its insularity. Whereas Mr. Cruikshank devotes some excellent pages to the European idea of Liberalism, Mr. Birch makes no such high-falutin' claims; and the only Tory poster which he selects for reproduction is an old-fashioned piece of mild anti-Semitism. Despite Mr. Churchill's advocacy of Western Union, contempt for foreigners and foreign ideas is one spot the leopard will not change.

Mr. Hall has a shorter story to tell, and, up to the General Strike, he makes a good job of it. Henry George is given his proper importance, and Karl Marx is dismissed as a man whose "works have unfortunately survived him"—which shows that a British Socialist can be as contemptuous of the ideas he borrows as a British Tory. In treating of the last twenty years, however, Mr. Hall's sins of omission rival Mr. Birch's sins of commission. The 1929 Government is described without any reference to Oswald Mosley, the Socialist League without a mention of Aneurin Bevan or Stafford Cripps, and the story stops at 1945. If the blameless product of such political discretion is a little flat, Mr. Hall will no doubt reply that at least he has hurt no one's feelings.

To the serious student of politics, the most interesting feature of these three books is the full-page chart of Party organisation—presumably derived from official sources—which each includes. Lay them out side by side and compare them. The Labour and Liberal organisations are closely similar, with the Liberal Assembly and the Labour Party Annual Conference as the representative centres of supreme authority. Both are genuinely democratic parties, in which policy is formed from the bottom upwards and leadership is responsible to a delegate assembly. The Conservative chart on the other hand is a pyramid whose apex is THE LEADER and next under him come three individuals, nominated by THE LEADER—the Chairman of the National Union, the Chief Whip and the Chairman of the Party. Nowhere is there to be found any trace of a democratic assembly. The whole Tory organisation indeed is designed to execute the will of one man, who, in Mr. Birch's sublimely simple words "is responsible for the policy of the Party." "Britain in Pictures" has triumphantly proved its value as

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political education. Here, in these three charts, is illustrated the real difference between Right and Left, between the party of authority and the parties of democracy, between the rule of persons and the rule of the people. R. H. S. CROSSMAN

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

Symphonies. SIBELIUS: *No. 2 in D major* (Philadelphia/Ormandy. LX1175–9.) *Ditto* (LPO/Cameron. AK2127–31). The first of these issues is a theatrical performance, aggravated by three obvious faults: the Andante is coldly and superficially conducted. We miss the sense of fear so well conveyed by Kajanus. Then, the famous oboe passage in the Scherzo is ill played—inexpressive, too fast, and poor in tone. Finally, the transition to the Finale makes a confused impression, and does not carry us with it. On the other hand, the string playing is absolutely magnificent, and the recording, though on the coarse side, is less objectionable than some. Mr. Cameron seems the direct opposite of Mr. Ormandy. He is not out for display and his careful—at times rather nervous—conducting secures a performance in which detail is not constantly being sacrificed to homogeneity of tone. Important woodwind phrases stand out as they should, and the recording, besides admitting a really resonant bass, deals much more successfully with the widely varying textures and dynamics. But it must be emphasised that the vitality of the whole performance is somewhat low, and the string playing thin and limp, compared with the sumptuousness and glittering attack of the Philadelphia strings. This disadvantage, in a very Tchaikovskian symphony, is of some moment. DVORAK: *No. 4 in G minor* (Philharmonia/Kubelik. C3852–6). I should be able to welcome unreservedly this sensitive and energetic performance of a most poetic work (Dvorak's "Pastoral" symphony), if the engineers had resisted the temptation to let too much through. As it is, the tutti are excruciating, solo instruments are spotlit, and the tone is never agreeable above mezzo-forte. Though much less arrestingly played, the NSO/Cameron set (Decca) will be preferred by those who value quality of sound. The old Talich set is of course a classic of style, but the recording shows its age.

Concertos. BACH: *Violin Concerto in E major* (Gioconda de Vito/London Chamber Orch/Bernard. DB6884–6). Anyone who found Gioconda de Vito's performance of the *Chaconne* from the D minor Partita unduly romantic, will question the exaggerated *rallentandi* at the ends of the passages in this concerto. Otherwise the style is good and the tone very fine indeed. The recording deals successfully with the subtle variations of string texture. On balance this issue replaces the Menuhin set, which dates from 1934. MOZART: *Piano Concerto E flat*, K271 (Lili Kraus/Philharmonia/Süsskind. R20570–3). Miss Kraus's tone is hard, her rhythm unyielding, and her phrasing often at variance with the melodic line. Worse still, she seems to have lost all sense of gradation: the music is blown at us in little bursts, as if through a choked tube. The recording is dry and the balance so bad that the piano constantly drowns the orchestra.

Miscellaneous Orchestral. PROKOFIEV: *Ballet Music* from *Cinderella* (Royal Opera House Orch/Braithwaite. DX1562–4). One of the best recordings on this list. Very lively performance. All the tricks of modern scoring given plenty of room to make their effect. Intrinsically unoriginal music, but most efficient for its purpose and not without moments of a more serious beauty. R. STRAUSS: *Salome—Dance of the Seven Veils* (Philadelphia/Ormandy. LX1172). Quite without merit. Even if the performance were twice as distinguished as it is, there would be little to be said for a modern recording which cannot accommodate a larger proportion of the score. J. STRAUSS: *Tales from the Vienna Woods* (Philadelphia/Ormandy. LX1180). There is something about Johann Strauss which puts symphony orchestras—and conductors—on their metal. Without being very seductive, this is a brilliant performance, rather plumply recorded. On the whole I still prefer the Krips disc (Col), though it is coarsely recorded in places and omits the pianissimo episode just before the end—a backward glance which may or may not be an interpolation (I have not had access to a score) but which certainly makes a most romantic effect in Ormandy's performance. ROSSINI: *William Tell*—Overture (Augusteo/De Sabata. DB6880–1). A thrilling performance, but—like several recent issues of this orchestra—very drily recorded; and my copies, at any rate, are swingers. AUBER: *The Crown Diamonds*—Overture (Boston Prom/Fiedler. C3857). A tactful rendering—vigorous, but not boisterous. The phrasing is delicate and the woodwind has some lovely passages of sound. The recording is excellent. ELGAR: *Chanson de Matin, Chanson de Nuit*, Op. 15 (Philharmonia/Collingwood. C3858). These inoffensive, mildly sentimental "songs without words" are very agreeably played. The recording presents no difficulties. SMETANA: *The Bartered Bride—Polka* and *Dance of the Comedians* (BBC Theatre Orch/Goehr. K1667). Distinctly inferior to the splendid Beecham disc (HMV).

Chamber Music and Piano Solo. HAYDN: *The Seven Last Words from the Cross* (Griller String Quartet. AK2139–47). This wonderful and extraordinary work was composed in 1785 for the cathedral of Cadiz. To quote the composer himself: "The walls, windows, and pillars of the church were hung with black cloth, and only one large lamp hanging from the centre of the roof broke the solemn obscurity. At midday the doors were closed and the ceremony began. After a short service the bishop ascended the pulpit, pronounced the first of the seven words . . . and delivered a discourse thereon. This ended, he left the pulpit and prostrated himself before the altar. The pause was filled by music." Originally written for orchestra, the work was afterwards scored for string quartet with all Haydn's mature skill. The advantage of possessing the movements on disc is inestimable, for, beautiful and variously expressive though they are, it is very difficult indeed to attend to eight adagios (introduction and seven "words") in unbroken succession. This is an entirely praiseworthy issue. The players adopt a rational tempo (i.e., not so slow as to drag) and at every turn give evidence of a loving care for balance of parts, tonal beauty, and effortless coalescence. The recording is first rate. The fill-up (an unusually welcome one) is the Minuet and Trio from Haydn's last, unfinished Quartet, Op 103. BEETHOVEN: *Violin Sonata in A major*, Op. 12, No. 2 (Rostal/Osborn. AK1958–9). A set of this summery sonata was badly needed. Piano recording has never been Decca's strong suit, but there has been improvement lately, of which this is an example, although a few *sforzandi* hit the microphone. The work is neatly played. HANDEL: *Sonata in A minor* (Carl Dolmetsch (Treble recorder)/Joseph Saxby. K2175). An agreeable work of no outstanding interest. The recorder does not sound unduly owlish and the balance is good. STRAVINSKY: *Pastorale* for Violin and Wind Quartet (Szigeti and Qt); *Russian Maiden's Song* (Szigeti/Stravinsky. LX1174). The *Pastorale* is a charming little piece, the *Russian Maiden's Song* a very dull one. Recorded at an excessively high level, in a dead studio, Szigeti's violin is made to squeak like a bagpipe. Not recommended. SCHUMANN: *Waldszenen*, Op. 82 (Clara Haskil. AK2110–1). A very refined, distinctively feminine rendering, such as one can imagine Clara Schumann approving. In "Vogel als Prophet" Miss Haskil observes neither the staccato on the last note of each phrase, nor the quaver rest which follows it; otherwise her conception is beautifully enigmatic. CHOPIN: *Scherzo No. 3 in C sharp minor* (Malcuzynski. LX1173). Malcuzynski is not quite as strikingly successful here as in his record of the Second Scherzo, which

is definitely a star. The little cascades which decorate the chorale tune ought to glitter more decisively; and the dotted note in the double-octave passage is not fully observed. But the performance is more than averagely good and the piano tone well realised. The turn-over, however, is particularly stupid. SCARLATTI: *Sonatas in B minor*, L.33, and *E major*, L.430 (Horowitz. DB6882). In spite of a shallow, rather tinny recording, this disc should be bought, partly for the sake of Horowitz's beautiful gradations of tone, which fully justify the use of the piano in this music. L.33 will be known to many from its inclusion in "The Good-Humoured Ladies" ballet. L.430, hitherto unrecorded, is a fascinating example of Scarlatti's inventive genius. DEBUSSY: *La Cathédrale Engloutie* (Solomon. B9597). Solomon appears to me definitely inferior to Gieseking (Col) in his recording of this piece. The fortissimo chords are unpleasantly hard, the pedalling is too cloudy for recording purposes, and in the bass figure on the final page the notes are indistinguishable. MOMPOU: *Cancion y Danza*, No. 6; ALFONSO: *Capricho en forma de Bolero* (Soriano. C3859). The Mompou piece is delightful music and shows off to perfection the qualities of this brilliant and most individual pianist. The *Capricho* is too commonplace to be worth playing—a wicked waste of trouble. Recording excellent.

Vocal. Songs by Debussy, Ravel, Fauré, Hahn, Tchaikovsky, and Liszt (Maggie Teyte); Songs by Wagner, Gluck, and Robert Franz (Lorri Lail) (Rimington, Van Wyck album). The interest and variety of this well recorded issue, and the out-of-the-way-ness of many of the songs, more than outweigh the considerable unevenness of the renderings. Except in Ravel and Fauré I cannot applaud Miss Teyte's contribution. In the "Letter" scene from Act I of *Pelléas et Mélisande* her style is much too forceful; and to sing *both* parts in the scene from Act IV (a love duet, too!) makes nonsense of the music, especially as she does not attempt to differentiate the characters. A tasteless trick. Tchaikovsky's "Les Larmes," again, is spoilt by vulgar emphasis. In "O quand je dors"—a lovely song, immortalised by Elisabeth Schumann in a now (alas!) deleted disc—Miss Teyte ignores the essentially romantic features of the style. Lorri Lail possesses a rich, expressive mezzo of predominantly dark quality. Her phrasing is inclined to be choppy, and her forte unpleasing (here I think she may have been ill served by the recording); but she sings with great intelligence and sense of style. There seems little point in using a harpsichord for the Gluck songs, which are, however, well worth hearing, as are also those by Franz. We ought to have more of this undeservedly neglected composer: he has written even better songs than these. Except for the Gluck discs, all these songs have the great benefit of Gerald Moore's accompaniment. EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

(To be concluded)

Week-end Competitions

No. 1,007

Set by Naomi Lewis

Prizes are offered for a letter to the Editor of this paper on the subject of the weekly competitions, from one of the following well-known correspondents: Disgusted, Paterfamilias, Pro Bono Publico, Medical Practitioner, Wykehamist, Perplexed, Mother of Seven, Schoolmaster, Noblesse Oblige, Classical Scholar. Limit 150 words. Entries by June 14th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 1,004

Set by Gerald Giradot

The usual prizes are offered for a testamentary letter from a black sheep father to his priggish son. Limit, 200 words.

Report by Gerald Giradot

This competition was evidently a mistake. It was based on a misapprehension—the belief that the devil always has the advantage because he endows his adherents with more than their fair share of grace, wit, beauty, charm, intelligence and style. Well, I must sadly report that this is no longer true. As I read letter after letter my sympathies shifted (which was not at all the idea) entirely to the sons. What a crew these black sheep fathers were! Fourth-form Lotharios and tap-room punsters, vulgar-minded prigs and facetious fiddlers. No doubt it wasn't as easy as it looked, but no temptation to the obvious way out was resisted. They plunged, these fathers, into the shallow end and showed off there, loutishly, among the minnows and the small-fry.

So the task was an unusual one, I understand, for competition setters, namely, to sort through the entries again and again to find anything deserving a prize. Finally I picked on the following four and award them each a guinea.

MY DEAR GERALD,

May the unworthy father of a too-worthy son offer him some death-bed advice? You and I, Gerald, are both failures, because neither of us has lived moderately. I have burned the candle at both ends, and you have kept your light shining before men with quite painful brilliance beneath a transparent bushel. A little respectability would not have hurt me, and a few scraps of human weakness would have made you easier to live with. But whereas I can at least claim to have wished sometimes to join the communion of saints, you have always wallowed in complete and virtuous self-satisfaction. You are soggy with virtue.

Here, then, is my last word: avoid extremes! Acquire some amiable, harmless vices. Don't worry about a few smuts on your moral complexion. Associate occasionally with publicans and sinners (believe me, they know all the best stories). And if all this is beyond you, do at least pretend, for your friends' sakes, that you are not as holy as you look.

Your half-repentant father . . .

P.S.—Wasn't my will a bitter disappointment? No debts! Even a modest nest-egg for you! Give it away if you like; but I don't think you will.

ALLAN M. LAING

MY DEAR LAD,

You will be sorry to hear your old Dad will soon be took. I feel to want to send a few words, hope you will excuse. You young chaps don't know how to live, like when I were a lad. You fash yourself working over, for what, they will only get it off you. Your pension. I used to say to your poor mother, when we have out over we won't go hording up like Some, when you go on the Assistance what. How much have you got, why don't you sell the things? Put it into the bairns' bellies I said and on there backs, then have a good time, and let the assistance get that off us if they can. I did right by your poor mother, we had some grand times. You ought to think of Nellie and not be always save save save and the Tax they get off you too. That insurance you took out on me, don't throw it away on them undertakers, sharks the lot. You get a bit of Good of it and take Nellie and Bill to Blackpool. Fond thoughts of all, Dad.

C. B.

MY DEAR PERCY,

With your usual unction you have doubtless forgiven and forgotten the insults and embarrassments I heaped upon you inter vivos. My Will is designed to restore the status quo.

I should be failing in my duty if I allowed you to fasten your consecrated but no doubt itching fingers

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upon the income from that masterpiece of salacity *The Autobiography of a Super Scamp* which constitutes the (regrettably) unsquandered remnant of my estate. In order to make some modest provision, however, for those trifling upsets which will occur in the best regulated vicarages, I have put aside certain moneys for your Wife if divorced, for your Daughter if compromised by your Curate, for your Curate if compromised by your Daughter and for your good self if unfrocked.

I have also endowed scholarships at Summerhill for free and open competition among my legitimate and illegitimate descendants. Vive le sport!

Finally I commend to you Tehiva, your co-executrix, joint residuary legatee and common-law step mother. Cherish her, Percy! She has cheered my declining days and is beside me as I write.

From a bed of decrepitude, Nicky.

FRANK DUNNILL

MY DEAR EDWIN,

In recent years our ways have tended rather far apart. I have always regretted this, although my mode of living has not been one which I could conscientiously advise you to follow. My life, indeed, has been pleasant rather than admirable. Nevertheless, and despite periods of wild extravagance, I have contrived to leave a satisfactory estate, a considerable part of which has been acquired by methods here best described as unorthodox. I am aware that those high principles which, as I have been pleased and surprised to notice, invariably actuate your behaviour, may make it difficult for you to accept this legacy. Should you find it not merely difficult but impossible to do so, there are, of course, many excellent charities to which this money might be devoted. While I have hitherto successfully avoided paying for my sins, I should myself have no objection whatever to this belated form of reparation. I am disinclined to believe in personal immortality, perhaps because the system of rewards and punishments traditionally entailed might be inconvenient for me. If I am proved wrong on this point, I shall await your decision with the very greatest interest. Your affectionate Father.

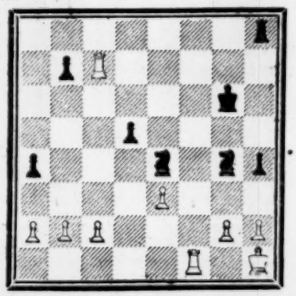
D. E. C. CAVE

CHESS: Pin-Point a Pattern

HOWEVER a player may have got his *flair* for spotting (and promoting) combinative possibilities, whatever may be the actual components of combinative power—one of them, no doubt, is memory. The experienced player's main advantage is that, consciously or subconsciously, he bears in mind a store of positional and combinative patterns repeatedly seen in his own or in other people's games. Think of the "smothered mate"; or the possibilities resulting from a Rook or two penetrating to the 7th rank; or from one's Knight at Kt5, attacked by P-R3 but allowed to die at his post after having been supported by P-R4, thus opening the R-file for an attack (mostly in conjunction with a Bishop) against the castled enemy King. These, of course, are among the best known stock-patterns; but there are a good many others, more or less obvious, which a good player will soon recognise as a breeding ground for combinative possibilities, and indeed strive to obtain. Once so pregnant a position has been reached, one should certainly start fishing for some immediate combinative chance. Sometimes one may actually bring it off. Yet, when giving birth to some such brilliancy, one will generally find one's memory (conscious or subconscious) a useful midwife.

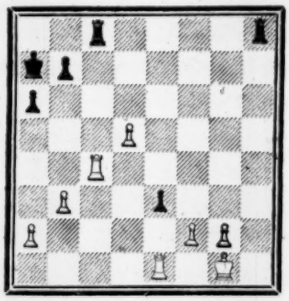
Look at this position won by Johner brilliantly, if somewhat obviously:

White	*Black*
(1)	Kt-Kt6 ch
(2) P x Kt	P x Kt ch
(3) K-Kt1	Kt-B7
(4) R x Kt	R-R8 ch!
(5) K x R	P x R

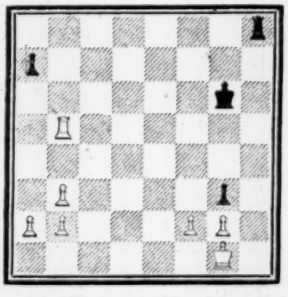


When perceiving rather than conceiving this not infrequent pattern of the unstoppable pawn, Johner's subconscious mind may well have carried the memory of some similar position, such as this very obvious *coup* by Niemzovitch:

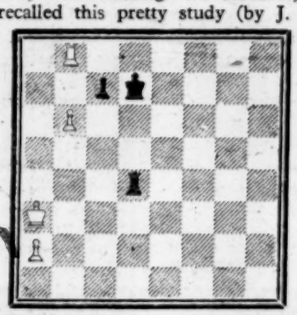
White	*Black*
(1)	R-K8 ch
(2) K x R	P x P



Again it may have been one of these two games (or a similar pattern) which a certain amateur bore in mind when he must have felt the elation of being about to bring off a brilliancy against the German master Kurt Richter (from whose book *Kurzgeschichten um Schachfiguren* these examples are quoted). Here too R-R8 ch, followed by P x P was played. But here elation was brief. The old pattern had a flaw. Richter simply played R-KB5, and after K x R, by playing P-Kt4 ch he vacated the point Kt2 for his King to catch the dangerous P, and then to win with his Q-side majority.



I wonder, when finding this resource, whether Richter recalled this pretty study (by J. Moravec,



Leipzig, 1937), even though here is yet another flaw in the ointment? Obviously, White's only chance to win is:

White	*Black*
(1) R-Q8 ch	K x R
(2) P-Kt7	

And just as obviously Black will seek the same pattern of defence:

(2)	R-QKt5
(3) K x R	P-B4 ch

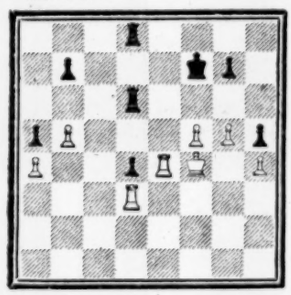
Now, if White takes the Pawn, Black, by K-B2, would draw easily. But White plays:

(4) K-Kt5!	K-B2
(5) K-R6	K-Kt1 (forced)
(6) K-Kt6!	P-B5
(7) P-R4	P-B6
(8) P-R5	P-B7
(9) P-R6	P queens
(10) P-R7 mate	

Competitors are invited to provide further examples of a combinative pattern repeated in different games like a recurrent musical *motif*. Competitors should preferably draw on their personal experience rather than their knowledge of chess literature; but such examples, though acquired rather than experienced, will not be ruled out. A guinea chess book token for the most interesting entry, ½ guinea consolation prize. Entries by June 13th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 2

Many ingenious entries and some witty ones, such as "Kafka-climax" (C. Bevan), "Goose-gang" (A. R. Cripps) and "Gadarene-pull" (E. Morgan). "Turnstyle" (with an elaborate justification of the compliment) is suggested by Joyce Johnson. "Plank-walk" comes from Desmond McCarthy and C. J. Prebble, while Curtis-Raleigh and E. G. Semler want to borrow "squeeze" from bridge terminology. "Movicide" (Fisher) heads the list of numerous entries of a more whimsical turn. R. Jeff (aged 15) nicely justifies his suggestion "dreadmill." This deserves a consolation prize of a 5s. chess book token; £1 goes to Gerald Abrahams, whose suggestion "movebound" comes most near to practical usability. At any rate it seems unlikely that "zugzwang" will be dethroned. Gerald Abrahams also sends this delightful "movebound" position from a game of his in the Lancashire Championship, 1948:



White	*Black*
(1) P-Kt6 ch	K-B3 (to prevent K-Kt5)
(2) R-Q1	P-Q6 (forced, so as to meet QR-K1 with R-Q5)
(3) R x P	P-Kt3
(4) R-Q5	R(1)-Q2
(5) R-K8	"movebound"

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COMPANY MEETING

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RECORD TURNOVER AND PROFITS

LORD MCGOWAN ON NATIONALISATION

The 22nd annual general meeting of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., was held on May 31, in London.

The Rt. Hon. Lord McGowan, K.B.E., D.C.L., LL.D. (chairman of the company), in the course of his speech, said:

I think you will agree with me that the year's record is one of which we can be justly proud. We have had a record turnover, and have made record profits at reasonable selling prices. The output by volume in 1948 was about double that of 1938. At over £37,000,000 the value of our direct exports in 1948 was nearly four times that in 1938, and represented about 30 per cent. of our total sales. Much of this business is severely competitive, and depends upon the maintenance of efficient sales organisations in all parts of the world, as well as upon low production costs.

Much emphasis is placed nowadays on greater productive efficiency and rightly so. But sound selling and distribution are equally important, particularly in our overseas markets to-day. Great skill is needed to determine which are the most important, or most suitable, markets, having regard to the need to earn hard currency, and to cope with multitudinous trade and exchange restrictions. Just now, as a buyers' market is returning, it is more important than ever to be on the alert, and to be certain that we have keen and able men in the key positions in our overseas sales organisations. To ensure this, constant visits are being paid by our people to those markets in which we are represented, and, being on the spot, they can judge the suitability or otherwise of those in charge of our business.

OVERSEAS INTERESTS

In addition to sales organisations, the company has large manufacturing interests in companies in 14 countries overseas, and these companies make an important contribution to Britain's balance of payments by the profits which they earn, and the assistance they afford for the sale of complementary products from this country.

The emphasis placed on research, and the development of new processes and new products, and the bold plans for capital development to meet expanding demands for existing products, and to manufacture completely new products, are evidence that the management of your company remains dynamic. The company is now spending over £4,000,000 a year on research and development.

"FIERCE COMPETITION" AHEAD

The year 1948 has, in many ways, been exceptional. With a sellers' market, plants have been on almost continuous full-time operation during the whole year. Factors, such as the shortage of coal and of other materials, which hindered us in 1947, were absent, or much reduced, in 1948. At the same time harmonious relations have been maintained with all grades of employees. The company has received the co-operation of the trade unions in introducing improved methods of production, and in the extended use of incentive schemes based on work measurement. Productivity has gone up; absenteeism has gone down.

When we turn to the prospects for 1949, we find no ground for pessimism. But the sellers' market has gone for nearly all products, and we shall have to fight hard to keep our overseas markets, to expand them, and to develop new markets, particularly in hard-currency areas. We are, however, alive to the fierce competition which we are now facing, but with efficient new plants coming into operation we believe we are able to meet it.

I cannot offer any hope of considerable reductions in prices at home, except for a few products, because our policy has already been to keep home prices as low as is prudent, having regard to the heavy cost of building or replacing plant at to-day's prices. Many of our products are the raw materials of other industries, and by keeping our prices down we assist our customers to sell their products at prices which are competitive with foreign producers. Although the Board of Trade index of wholesale prices of industrial materials and manufactures in this country rose from 100 to 233 between 1938 and 1948, our index of sales realisations of I.C.I. products sold in this country rose during that period from 100 to only 144. That, I think you will agree, is an impressive measure of increased efficiency and productivity.

The programme of capital development in 1948 proceeded at a quicker pace than in 1947, because of its gathered momentum and because some of the earlier shortages had been eased. While we are keeping all our capital projects under review in the light of changing markets, temporary fluctuations in the market for the basic products made by the company are not allowed to influence decisions based upon our judgment of the long-term trend of demand for these products.

BURDEN OF TAXATION

The heavy burden of taxation makes it exceedingly difficult to plough back profits into the business for capital replacement and development. We had hoped that the Chancellor would afford some substantial and permanent relief to industry in this matter, and I am sorry that he has fallen back upon what is no more than a temporary expedient which will enable some concerns to gain time.

The increase in the initial allowance for new plant from 20 per cent. to 40 per cent. reduces the tax liability in one year, only at the cost of increasing the liability for subsequent years. No relief whatever is given in respect of the heavy and necessary increase in investment in working capital. We can only hope that in some future Budget, after more adequate consideration of these problems, a more substantial and more comprehensive measure of relief will be given.

However, your company's capital development plans have gone forward, thanks to its reserves and to the splendid response of the stockholders to the offer of 10 million new shares last year. The confidence of the stockholders at a time when the international outlook was indeed black was most gratifying to your Board.

In maintaining the Ordinary dividend at 10 per cent. for the year, when the profit would have justified a higher dividend, your Board have been influenced primarily by the need to consolidate the company's finances, and to keep adequate resources available for capital development. It happens that these considerations coincide with the request of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the voluntary limitation of dividends, but your Board do not regard such a limitation as sound in principle, except in a national emergency, and for a short period.

RUMOURS REGARDING THE FUTURE

There have been for the past months rumours regarding the future of your company should the present Government be elected for a further term. A publication recently issued on the authority of the National Executive of the Labour party for their forthcoming conference at Blackpool contains a specific reference to I.C.I. At no time has the company been unwilling to explain in the fullest manner to the Government of the day its operations and its conduct. The company has nothing to hide, and has always had a sense of accountability, not only to its customers, employees and stockholders, but to the public at large.

Your Board take the view that I.C.I. is not an appropriate subject for nationalisation. Too many people think of the nationalisation of a large industrial concern as a domestic affair only, and fail to realise what repercussions action of this kind would have in our markets overseas. I have been much abroad lately on the company's behalf, most recently in South America, and I can assure you that the nationalisation of your company would generally be regarded by those with whom we trade and with whom we have joint manufacturing enterprises as a grave mistake in British commercial policy, and, furthermore, as being destructive of that good will and co-operation which have been of so much benefit in the past, to both the country and this company.

Not only would there be difficulties in maintaining exports, and, therefore, a loss of earning power in valuable foreign currencies, but countries which at present buy chemicals from Britain would be encouraged to erect plants of their own, not necessarily with British capital. It is difficult to say what short-term, and long-term, effects this would have upon employment in this country, but quite clearly this country cannot afford the sacrifices involved.

Veiled threats of nationalisation, even if they are not implemented, have a most disturbing effect upon existing staff, and upon potential recruits to the staff. I can hardly imagine anything more damaging to the efforts at improving the productive industry of this country and the expansion of its exports than this talk of nationalisation. Your Board would take all proper steps to oppose the nationalisation of your company if the attempt were ever made.

The report was adopted.